

**THE DISTRIBUTION OF NULL CASE AND PRO IN MAH  
MERI PHRASES**

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**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS  
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**THE DISTRIBUTION OF NULL CASE AND PRO IN  
MAH MERI PHRASES**

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**THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE  
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**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS  
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
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**ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION**

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation analyses the existence of Null Case and PRO within the Mah Meri language following the Minimalist approach by Noam Chomsky who argues that PRO has null case checked by non-finite 'T'. The Mah Meri language being one of the endangered languages is dying since it is spoken only by most adults within the population and not practiced among the children. Due to that, this research can contribute to the documentation of Mah Meri language in syntax. In addition to that, like any other languages, the non-finite phrases of the Mah Meri language will be identified to analyses the PRO as null case suggested by the Minimalist Approach. Findings reveal that in the Null Subject Parameter, there are Null Case and PRO existence in Mah Meri phrases.

## ABSTRAK

Disertasi ini menganalisa kewujudan 'Null Case dan PRO' didalam Bahasa Mah Meri menggunakan program 'Minimalist' yang ditubuhkan oleh Noam Chomsky. Di dalam program 'Minimalist' ini, Noam Chomsky Menekankan bahawa PRO mempunyai 'Null Case' yang disemak menggunakan 'non-finite 'T'. Bahasa Mah Meri adalah merupakan salah satu bahasa yang semakin pupus kerana hanya digunakan oleh orang dewasa dan tidak dipraktikkan oleh generasi muda kaum Mah Meri dari sudut sintaks. Di samping itu, seperti bahasa-bahasa lain, 'non-finite phraes' dari Bahasa Mah Meri digunakan untuk menganalisa PRO sebagai 'null case' seperti yang disarankan oleh program 'Minimalist'/. Setelah analisa dijalankan, telah didapati bahawa wujudnya 'Null Case' di dalam Bahasa Mah Meri.

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## LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

PRO	:	Empty Categories
PRO-Drop	:	The empty subject position is filled by the element PRO
Null	:	Empty Categories
PPT	:	The principles and parameters theory
CHL	:	Computational system of human language
PF	:	Phonetic Form
LF	:	Logical Form
LF	:	Logical Form
TP	:	Tense Phrase
NP	:	Noun Phrase
VP	:	Verb Phrase
DP	:	Determiner Phrase
PP	:	Participle Phrase
AdjP	:	Adjective Phrase
D	:	Determiner
N	:	Noun
V	:	Verb
PRO	:	Pronoun (Only in the syntactic tree as appose to the term PRO used through out this study)
Conj	:	Conjunction
Adv	:	Adverb

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**THESIS TITLE: THE DISTRIBUTION OF NULL CASE AND PRO IN MAH  
MERI PHRASES**

**THEME: NULL AND PRO**

**PARTICIPANT: TOK BATIN OF THE MAH MERI TRIBE**

**LOCATION: PULAU CAREY**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

The list of questions were asked to the head of the Mah Meri tribe in Pulau Carey. The medium of language is Bahasa Melayu. He is a bilingual speaker whereby he is fluent

in both Bahasa Melayu and Mah Meri Language. The questions addressed to the participant are categorized into :

### **BACKGROUND OF THE PARTICIPANT**

1. Boleh bagitahu nama Tuan Batin dan berapa umur Tok Batin?  
*Tell me your name and how old are you?*
2. Sudah berapa lama menjadi Tok Batin?  
*How long have you become the Tok Batin?*
3. Sudah kah berkahwin dan mempunyai berapa anak?  
*Are you married and how many kids do you have?*
4. Apakah pekerjaan Tok Batin selain menjadi penghulu kampong?  
*What do you do for a living apart from being the head of village?*
5. Selain Bahasa Mah Meri, bahasa apakah lagi yang Tok Batin fasih?  
*Besides Mah Meri language, what other languages do you speak?*
6. Apakah agama Tok Batin?  
*What religion are you?*
7. Adakah Tok Batin sangat fasih dalam percakapan Bahasa Mah Meri?  
*Do you consider yourself fluent in speaking Mah Meri language?*

### **BACKGROUND OF THE VILLAGERS**

1. Berapa ramai lagi masih mengamalkan Bahasa Mah Meri sebagai Bahasa pengantar?  
*How many of the villagers still speak Mah Meri language?*

2. Adakah generasi muda di kampung ini masih bercakap Bahasa Mah Meri?  
*As for the younger generation in this village, do they still speak Mah Meri?*
3. Sekiranya generasi muda ini masih bercakap Bahasa Mah Meri, adakah mereka fasih dan sejauh mana kefasihan bercakap mereka?  
*If the younger generation still speak Mah Meri language, how fluent are they?*

### LEXICAL (INCLUDING NOUN, VERB, ADJECTIVE, ADVERB AND PARTICIPLE)

1. Apakah perkataan '**orang**' dalam versi Mah Meri?  
*How do you say '**people**' in Mah Meri?*
2. Apakah perkataan '**lari**' dalam versi Mah Meri?  
*How do you say '**run**' in Mah Meri?*
3. Apakah perkataan '**makan**' dalam versi Mah Meri?  
*How do you say '**eat**' in Mah Meri?*
4. Apakah perkataan '**pergi**' dalam versi Mah Meri?  
*How do you say '**pergi**' in Mah Meri?*
5. Apakah perkataan '**kawan**' dalam versi Mah Meri?  
*How do you say '**friend**' in Mah Meri?*
6. Apakah perkataan '**baik**' dalam versi Mah Meri?  
*How do you say '**good**' in Mah Meri?*
7. Boleh kah anda berikan beberapa perkataan lain didalam Mah Meri?  
*Can you give me examples of other words in Mah Meri language?*

### SENTENCES

1. Berikan ayat yang lengkap untuk '**Orang itu lari**' dalam versi Mah Meri.  
*Can you give me a Mah Meri sentence version of the phrase '**That person ran**'*

2. Berikan ayat yang lengkap untuk '**Orang itu lari tahu tidak**' dalam versi Mah Meri.  
*Can you give me a Mah Meri sentence version of the phrase '**Do you know that the person ran**'*
  
3. Berikan ayat yang lengkap untuk '**Orang itu lari tahu tidak**' dalam versi Mah Meri.  
*Can you give me a Mah Meri sentence version of the phrase '**Do you know that that person ran**'*
  
4. Berikan ayat yang lengkap untuk '**Baik sangat**' dalam versi Mah Meri dan beberapa ayat yang menggunakan perkataan '**sangat**'.  
*Can you give me a Mah Meri sentence version of the phrase '**Very good**' and give me sentences using the word '**very**'.*
  
5. Berikan ayat yang lengkap untuk '**samaada dia benafas atau sudah mati**' dalam versi Mah Meri dan beberapa ayat yang menggunakan perkataan '**nafas**' dan '**mati**'.  
*Can you give me a Mah Meri sentence version of the phrase '**Whether he is still breathing or already dead**' and give me sentences using the word '**breathe**' and '**dead**'.*
  
6. Berikan beberapa ayat lain dalam versi Mah Meri  
*Please provide some sentences in Mah Meri language.*

## **NON FINITE SENTENCES**

1. Didalam Bahasa Mah Meri adakah wujudnya dua ayat yang lengkap yang digabungkan menjadi satu. Setelah digabungkan ayat tersebut tetap membawa maksud. Sebagai contoh ayat '**Doktor suruh dia**' dan ayat. '**perlahan lahan hembus nafas**' adalah dua ayat berasingan. Jika digabungkan akan menjadi ayat lengkap seperti '**Doktor suruh dia perlahan lahan hembus nafas**'

*In Mah Meri language, can we combine two different sentences that is already complete to form a full sentence that carries a proper message? For example a full sentence of **'The doctor asked him'** and another full sentence **'breathe slowly'** is being combined into **'The doctor asked him to breathe slowly'**.*

2. Didalam Bahasa Mah Meri adakah wujudnya dua ayat yang lengkap yang digabungkan menjadi satu. Setelah digabungkan ayat tersebut tetap membawa maksud. Sebagai contoh ayat **'Orang itu masih bernafas'** dan ayat. **'kawan dia sedang nazak'** adalah dua ayat berasingan. Jika digabungkan akan menjadi ayat lengkap seperti **'Orang itu masih bernafas tetapi kawan die sedang nazak'**.

*In Mah Meri language, can we combine two different sentences that is already complete to form a full sentence that carries a proper message? For example a full sentence of **'That person is still breathing'** and another full sentence **'his friend is dying'** is being combined into **'That person is still breathing but his friend is dying'**.*

3. Adakah Tok Batin faham tentang apa yang saya maksud kan dengan gabungan 2 ayat menjadikan satu ayat yang lengkap. Sekiranya ye, boleh kan Tok Batin berikan beberapa contoh ayat.

*Do you understand what do I mean by combining to complete sentence to form a proper sentence that still carries the same meaning. If so, please come up with some other examples.*

## **NULL CASE AND PRO**

1. Didalam ayat Mah Meri adakah wujud nya sesuatu yang tidak perlu disebut, namun ayat nya betul dan difahami. Sebagai contoh ayat **'Teruknya! Dia dah lari!'**. Jadi kita faham bahawa keadaan orang yang **'teruk'** adalah 'orang yang sama yang telah lari?'

*In a Mah Meri sentence, are there such thing as a missing subject but the sentence is comprehensible. For example, for the sentence 'Terrible! He has ran', we know that 'Terrible' refers to' the person who has ran'?*

2. Setujukah anda sekiranya terdapat ayat Mah Meri yang tidak lengkap (dengan ketiadaan perkataan) namun ayatnya mudah difahami?

*Do you agree that sentences without vocabulary in Mah Meri phrases is still understandable?*

3. Sekiranya anda bersetuju dengan soalan sebelum ini, nyatakan beberapa ayat di dalam Mah Meri.

*If you agree to the previous question, please provide more examples*

#### **GENERAL QUESTION**

1. Pada pendapat Tok Batin, adakah Bahasa Mah Meri semakin pupus?  
*In your opinion, do you think the Mah Meri language is dying?*
2. Sekiranya benar Bahasa Mah Meri semakin pupus, ada atau tidak langkah yang dilakukan untuk memastikan Bahasa ini tidak pupus?  
*If the Mah Meri language is dying, what do you do to preserve the language?*

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Foreword

Worldwide, there is an estimated of 6,500 languages reported (Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project [HRELP], 2004) and Mah Meri is one of these intricate weave of linguistic interest. Therefore, this study is regarded as an effort to understand the linguistic scenario of the language that is spoken by approximately 3000 Mah Meri people left in Malaysia (Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli [JHEOA], 2004). It is also signifying the standpoints of Malaysians pertaining to the conservancy of the Aslian languages.

In Malaysia, the linguistic background of this near extinct language is pertinent because it offers the status and the interchangeable of cultures it is related to, besides as being the backdrop to the entire Mah Meri population. It is also to study the domains and patterns of the Mah Meri language which “has only the oral tradition without the writing system” and is highly threatened (de Swaan, 2002). Asmah (1993) highlighted that the indigenous population of the country can be classified based on their linguistics background and categorized into two groups specifically the Austronesia language group and the Austroasiatic lanaguge. Some languages categorized as Austronesia stocks are languages like Malays, Jakun, Kanaq, Selitar and Temuan specifically the Proto Malay group.

## 1.2 Research Background

This section is essential to examine the background of the Mah Meri language where it covers the Mah Meri language as one of the endangered languages. It elaborated on the current scenario and provided examples and relevant information on the efforts made by the government and individual in order to understand, protect and preserve the language, specifically and the heritage, generally.

In the state of Selangor, Malaysia, along the south-west coast of the Peninsular Malaysia stretching from Port Kelang to Bukit Bakong in Sepang is the settlements of the Mah Meri people. The small ethnic group with the population size of less than 3,000 speaks the Mah Meri language, also known as *Besisi*, which has been reported to be in the *Threatened* group or Severely Endangered, as classified in the Language Endangerment Scale (Catalogue of the Endangered Languages, 2014).

Exist within Malaysia language settings where Malay language is the official medium of communication chosen among 139 acknowledged individual languages (Lewis, 2009), Mah Meri is identified as one out of the 25 endangered languages in the country (Moseley, 2010). It was suggested by Krauss (2007) that the term 'endangered' refers to the language or languages that are no longer learned by the younger generation in order to make sure of its survival. The declining numbers of speakers determine the death of the language because in the severely endangered languages, the youngest speakers are identified among the middle-aged generation who are within the age range of 35 to 60 years old (Krauss, 2007).



### 1.3 Problem Statement

The Level of Endangerment in the Language Endangerment Scale describes the Mah Meri language's intergenerational transmission as only spoken by most adults within the population and is not generally practiced among the children and this also indicates that the number of speakers are gradually decreasing as the children are learning standard Malay language upon their enrolment to formal schooling. Therefore, this indicates that almost all speakers of Mah Meri are bilingual Malay.

The Mah Meri language has been identified to be only used in non-official domains with the other major languages, as in this case, the standard Malay. However, the language still remains the primary language spoken domestically among the family member and this involved the preservation to the dying language. According to Crystal (2002), one of the ways in preserving the language is by utilizing the technological devices and continuous application of the language by the speakers. Other researchers of the Aslian language made various kind of initiatives in order to preserve the heritage of the Aslian community, such as, Tai Kent Lim (2010) who came up with the Digital Repository System that assists in documenting the Aslian language. It was also suggested by him that Aslian museums to be constructed to encourage easy access to the Aslian resources for the general public.

Therefore, this research believes that another way to preserve the language is by understanding the syntactical pattern in the language itself and for that this research employs the Minimalist Approach by Chomsky in attempt to analyse the Noun Phrase Architecture of the Mah Meri language.

#### **1.4 Research Scope**

The research is aimed to justify the existence of Null Case and PRO within the Mah Meri language. It is also to understand the linguistic architecture of the language, in particular the development of non-finite clauses and the non-finite tense and how it influences the Null Case and Pro of this threatened discourse. So, this study opts to analyse the Mah Meri language using some theories and principles in the scope of Chomsky's Minimalist Program specifically the Null Case and PRO only.

#### **1.5 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this research are the following:

- 1.5.1 To investigate if Null Case occurs in the Mah Meri language.
- 1.5.2 To identify the non-finite phrases in Mah Meri Phrases.
- 1.5.3 To study the distribution of PRO in the Mah Meri language.
- 1.5.4 To analyse PRO as null case checked by non-finite T of the Mah Meri language.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

In order to achieve the objectives of this research, the questions below are enlisted to provide some possibilities and guidelines in the research completion process. This research intended to answer the following general and specific questions.

### **1.6.1 General Question**

What are the relationships between the Null Case and PRO in terms of in identification of the non-finite phrases and non-finite T of the Mah Meri language?

### **1.6.2 Specific Questions**

- a) How does Null Case appear in the Mah Meri language?
- b) What are the possibilities of the existence of the non-finite phrases in Mah Meri language?
- c) What is the level of distribution in terms of PRO in the Mah Meri language?
- d) What is the PRO as null case checked by non-finite tense of the Mah Meri language?

## **1.7 Significance of The Research**

There are many studies that have been conducted in the past on the Mah Meri language. However, there is/are no adequate studies conducted on the (1) Null Case (2) and, PRO of the language especially that involved the occurrence of Non-finite phrases. Therefore, it is significant to conduct this research to further understand the intricate syntax value of the Mah Meri language within the linguistic capacity. The lacking of syntactical studies in this language requires an immediate attention because through the findings of studies, along with the lack of other studies in analysing Null case and PRO, turns this study as something that is worthwhile to pursue. Besides, the findings from this research are expected to contribute to the linguistics studies of a threatened language and offers assistance in creating the writing system of the language for the betterment of the new generations of linguist, if not, for the Mah Meri generation.

## **1.8 Limitation of The Research**

As the title of this research suggest, this study only focuses on analysing the appearance of Null Case and PRO within the Mah Meri language. Therefore, all results from this research are only appropriate within the focused language. The data collected is solely based on an interview without a structured observation due to time constraint and geographical limitations. Furthermore, other limitations including the use of approach which is only limited by using the Minimalist approach by Noam Chomsky, although this study can also use other suitable approaches or theories to analyse the Null Case and PRO of the Mah Meri language.

Finally, only one location will be covered for this study which is the Mah Meri language community at Kg Sungai Bumbun in Pulau Carey, Kuala Langat, Selangor granted that there are other subgroups of this language spoken community in other locations.

## **1.9 Definition of Key Terms**

To reach uniformity and create a flow in this research, several definitions will be applied. The definitions will be as follows:

### **1.9.1 Mah Meri Language**

Mah Meri is also known as the Bেসি language and it is spoken by the aboriginal or *Orang Asli* along the coast of Malay Peninsula, specifically the population that reside in Malacca and Selangor. It is a branch of the Aslian's language that is the Semelaic.

### **1.9.2 Minimalist Approach**

The Minimalist Approach is a program or an effort to discover the level or amount to which the human language faculty is determined. The program uses conceptual-intentional “interface conditions” and also the sensorimotor with the considerations of “virtual conceptual necessity”. In fact, the necessity in this approach refers to the general considerations of three factors which are simplicity, elegance and economy (Langendoen, 2003). The human language faculty is considered as a “perfect system” if it is wholly determined by all these factors as it meets the external constraints and it

can be done (Chomsky, 1995). In other words, Chomsky regards Minimalism as a program and not as a theory as it seeks the characterization of the factors by the flexibility of the multiple directions. In fact, the program also provides a conceptual framework that is used to guide the development of the grammatical theory.

### **1.9.3 Government and Binding Theory**

In the study of syntax and phrase structure grammar, Noam Chomsky (1990) has developed the transformational grammar and it is called the Government and Binding Theory. The theory is a revision of the earlier linguistics theories which has emerged into the Minimalist Program

### **1.9.4 Null Case and PRO**

In *An Introduction to Syntactic Analysis and Theory* by Wiley Blackwell (2014), PRO refers to a pronominal determiner (DP) phrase in the generative linguistics, which is a phrase that lacks of phonological content. Furthermore, by itself, it is seen as a part of the empty categories set. Null pronoun PRO, on the other hand, is hypothesized in the position of the subject of non-finite clauses. Therefore, one of the elements of PRO is when it transpires in a non-finite complement clause. These clauses may be bound by the main clause subject that is also known as the *subject control* or the main clause object, which is also known as the *object control*.

### **1.9.5 The Null Parameter**

The Null Parameter refers to the parameter that defines whether a certain language falls into the pro-drop language or otherwise. According to the Dictionary of Language and Linguistics, the case in pro-drop languages often helps in identifying the empty pro-element by its governor especially in a positive setting within the parameter.

### **1.10 Research Organization**

The research will be organized as follows:

#### **1. Chapter One**

This chapter summarizes an overview of the research and provide a justification for choosing the area on syntactical analysis on PRO and Null Case in the Mah Meri language. The first chapter will also clarify the objectives and the significance of conducting this research. Generally, this chapter covers the introduction, research background, problem statement, research objectives and the definition of the key terms.

#### **2. Chapter Two**

Chapter Two covers the previous research in the area of syntactical analysis of various languages. Besides, the earlier findings are integrated to support the current

research and explain the area that contributes to the syntactical analysis of the chosen language. Most of the literature provides thorough coverage on the linguistic area of PRO and Null Case specifically on the analysis of its existence of various languages.

### **3. Chapter Three**

Chapter Three states the information on the research methodology specifically based on the research design, instrumentation and the technique used to analyse the data. Besides, the conceptual framework is also provided in this chapter, along with the hypothesis, independent variables, dependent variable.

### **4. Chapter Four**

The chapter discusses the research findings and results of the research and how it relates to the Minimalism Approach as suggested by Chomsky.

### **5. Chapter Five**

In this chapter, the implication, recommendations and conclusion of the research are provided. The possible answer to the research questions are also provided to indicate the achievement of the the research objectives.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

According to Chomsky (2001a), the Minimalist Program describes the general properties, which may not appear in all, of the syntactic description within the natural language. These properties should be based from either (1) the independent mental systems interactions or (2) the organic systems properties of. In fact, there had been some profound advances and discoveries especially of that related to generative syntax where patterns and principles were identified. The increasing number of studies has shed light on some other linguistics related topics and puzzles and encouraged this research to be conducted. At the same time, it is rational that the area of PRO and Null Case is phenomenal in the study of endangered language as the Mah Meri. Based on the principles within the Minimalist Program, specifically of syntax and morphology and a little dash of apparent connection to external cognitive systems and some general properties of organic systems, this chapter is written.

The discussion in this chapter reflects the provisional character of the investigation where the two main sections of the various literatures especially those that concern the area of Null case and the distribution of PRO is highlighted. The first section focuses on the in-depth key concepts and terminologies opted for this study. This includes the influence of the Minimalist Approach by Noam Chomsky and also Lasnik. On the other hand, the second section highlights on the literatures specifically on the null case and the distribution of PRO. All in all, the purpose of this chapter is

to provide the practitioners with some general insight on the background of this study as well as the previous researchers and studies related to the Minimalist Program and syntactical analysis particularly on null case.

## **2.2 Global Language System**

The world language system is seen as the connections between language groups, as suggested by de Swaan (2001) in his book *Words of the World: The Global Language System*. Also, in his book de Swaan (2001) has compared the five different languages constellations including India, Indonesia, Africa, South Africa and the European Union. The dynamism of the world language system is explained by the combination of linguistics, economics, political science, history and sociology perspectives. Furthermore, these language connections occur by creating a robust and efficient network for the world population. Based on this, the world languages are divided into a hierarchy of four levels that consists of peripheral, central, supercentral and hypercentral languages (de Swaan, 2001) because the theories of the global language system are thought to be engaged in an uneven competition in various levels.

The evolution of the global language started as early as the 'military-agrarian' period where the rulers imposed their own language on the conquered land and so, the 'central' languages first emerged. This is further supported when it was also discovered that the peripheral languages were linked to the conquerors' language by the bilingual speakers during the formation of a certain empires. Due to this, the next stage of world language integration was formed. The first integration is the Latin language where it emerged from Rome. The usage of Latin was explored during the

Roman Empire as the invasion stretched along the coast of the Mediterranean, the southern half and north of Europe and then into the Germanic and Celtic countries. Therefore, from 27BC to the 476AD, the Latin language has fully spreaded and became the central language in Europe (de Swaan, 2001).

In terms of the widespread usage of the Chinese language, it started with the pre-classical version of the Han Chinese. In the 221 BC, the Chinese language is integrated due to the unification of China by Qin Shi Huang. Another language discussed is the Sanskrit, which has been widely spoken in the South Asia. The usage was encouraged by the teaching of Hinduism and Buddhism within these South Asian nations. According to de Swaan (2001), another example of the peripheal language is Arabic. Its widespread usage was through the expansion of the Arabic empire in the Afro-Eurasian land mass.

The distribution of the languages is determined by the military conquests of the previous centuries. The supercentral languages, for example, are spreaded through the land and the sea where the land bound languages spread through via marching empires like Japanese, Russian, German, Arabic, Hindi and Chinese. Interestingly, when the colonialism was defeated and forced to move out of the territory, the languages spread has also receded. To note, the conquests overseas such as English, French, Portuguese, Spanish plays the major role to spread the sea-bound languages. As a result, the indigenous people and their languages were successfully relegated to peripheral positions due to the huge influence in areas settled by European colonisers.

### 2.2.1 Characteristic of the language systems

According to de Swaan (2001), when there is a greater range of potential users and the language usage, there is a higher tendency of upward movement for an individual within that hierachial level. Therefore, de Swaan sees the second languages learning as the upward procedure rather than downward especially a language that is on the next level up. As an example, a speaker of peripheral language such as Catalan will learn to speak Spanish which is a central language, while a central language speaker (a Persian) will learn Arabic, a supercentral language. Both speakers are learning a language that superceed their own to functions in their society and region. However, with the speaker of the supercentral language, they will normally learn the hypercentral language (E,g: English, refer Figure 2.1) in order to ensure that there are globally functioning (Cook, 2013).

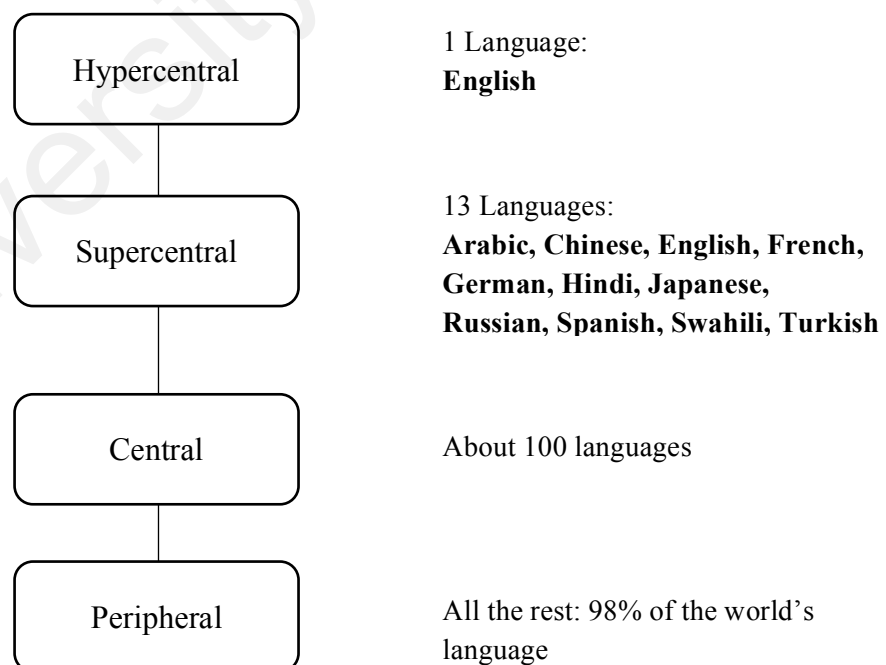


Figure 2.1: The hierarchy in the global language system theory (de Swan, 2001)

### *Peripheral languages*

The peripheral languages stood at the lowest level of the system. It forms the majority of the languages spoken in the world which is at approximately 98% from the total numbers of the global's languages. It is spoken by less than 10% of the population. According to de Swaan (2001), it is different from the central languages because they are the conversational languages or narrative mechanism rather than reading and writing. It is also about memory and remembrance rather than record. It is highly likely that the peripheral languages are used by the native speakers within a certain area and it is in an alarming state of becoming extinct due to the accelerating globalisation. It can be seen that a greater number of speakers for these languages acquire more central languages ensure knowledge and ideas a well-communicated across the society.

### *Central languages*

The central languages are made up of 100 languages that are spoken by 95% of the population in the world. It is implemented in the education system, media instruments and administration (de Swan, 2001). Most of the time, these languages are the national or the official languages of a particular country. It is commonly used as a narrative language in terms of recording what has been said or uttered. They can be easily detected in the newspaper reports, meeting minutes and proceedings, stored in archives such as the history books, collections of 'classic', of folk talks and folk ways. Nowadays, the usage of these languages are also recorded on electronic media and this help in the preservation of the languages for future generations. Many of the

central languages speakers are multilingual due to the fact that they are either the native speakers of a peripheral language and yet involved in the acquisition of the supercentral language.

### *Supercentral languages*

The next level of language is the supercentral languages. There are 13 supercentral languages and each is widely spoken because it functions as the connectors between the speakers of central languages. From Figure 2.1, it has been listed that the supercentral languages are included Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Malay, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili and Turkish. It was suggested by de Swan (2001) that these languages often have colonial trace because they were once imposed by the colonial power. Yet, after the countries received it independence, the languages had been continuously used in various administration system, politics, legal system, commerce, technological advancement and higher educational.

### *Hypercentral languages*

Finally, the highest level of the language system is the hypercentral languages. It connects the supercentral languages speakers. Presently, there is only one hypercentral language, which is English. The decision to award English as the hypercentral language was the result of the particular history of the English-speaking nations. There were a reciprocal expectations and predictions on the choices of language that the potential learners throughout the world make.

### 2.3 Austroasiatic Languages

The Austroasiatic languages, which is sometimes also recorded as *Austro-Asiatic* or *Austroasian*, are a larger component of language spoken in the continental Southeast Asia. Recently, the classifications of these languages are synonymous with the Mon-Khmer languages (Bradley, 2012). The speakers of these languages are scattered throughout India, Bangladesh, Nepal and the southern border of China. However, in these Austroasiatic languages, only Vietnamese, Khmer, and Mon are recorded to have a long-established recorded history. On the other hand, it was also found that only the Vietnamese and Khmer have official status as modern national languages spoken respectively in Vietnam and Cambodia (Hammarstrom, Forkel, Haspelmath, Martin & Sebastian, 2016). It has been identified by Ethnologue that there are 168 Austroasiatic languages that helped with the establishment of the thirteen Austroasiatic language families.

According to Sidwell and Blench (2009), the Austroasiatic phylum was suggested that it had been dispersed through the Mekong River drainage basin. In his lexicostatistical comparison, Sidwell (2009a) reported that there are 36 languages that are known enough to not include the loan words while there are little evident on the existence of internal branching. However, despite the issue, he managed to find an area where there is an increased contact between Katuic and Bahnaric languages (see Figure 2.2). Most Austroasiatic languages show similarity to Bahnaric and Katuic as they get closer to the language branches, apart from Munda and Nicobarese due to its geographically distance. Sidwell (2009a) then, has taken the opinion that the thirteen

branches of the Austroasiatic should be treated as equidistant based on the current evidence.

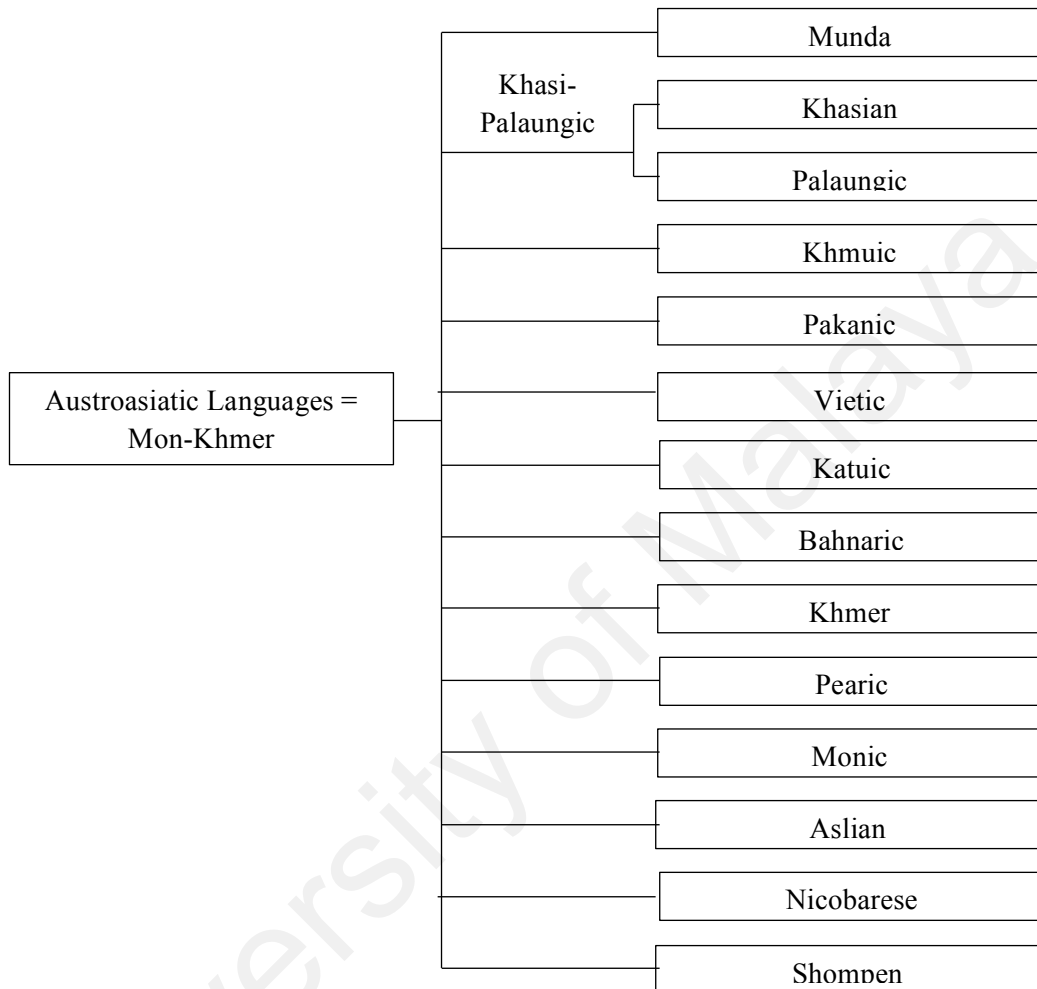


Figure 2.2: Thirteen Austroasiatic Languages Families (Sidwell, 2009)

In their research, Sidwell and Blench (2011) also proposed there is an existing evidence for Khasi-Palaungic node, another possible Khmuic relative. In terms of Shompen (see Figure 2.2), it was added in as an additional branch while at the same time believe that a Vieto-Katuic link is worth investigating. However, they concluded



that, in the Austroasiatic language families, the diversification happened very quickly for any structure to be nested and developed.

The relationship between Austroasiatic and Mon Khmer family can be seen clearly in Figure 2.2 as mentioned by Sidwell (2009) that Austroasiatic is also known as Mon Khmer and Mah Meri language and belongs to this group of Mon Khmer. Matisoff (2003) highlighted that linguists agreed to Gerald Diffloth's suggestion to name the whole group of these languages with the name of 'Aslian'. In figure 2.2, it is clear that 'Aslian' are grouped under the Austroasiatic, Mon Khmer language. Asmah (2006) also added that Mah Meri is also known as Mon Khmer a type of Senoi. Dating back, Benjamin (1976) and Diffloth (1975) also confirmed that Mah Meri is subdivided into the Aslian language under the Mon Khmer branch.

#### **2.4 Aslian Languages**

In the Malay Peninsula, the Aslian languages are categorized as a family of the Austroasiatic languages and it is a spoken language of the many Orang Asli. However, the total number of native speakers of these languages is approximately around fifty thousand. To make matter worse, some are at the verge of extinction. According to Blench (2006), the Aslian languages are originally appeared on the western side of the main range and mountains. Eventually, it spread eastwards into the state of Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang (Asmah, 2004). In the Austroasiatic language family, the Monic and Nicobarese are among those that are closely related to the Aslian languages (Blench, 2006). Also, it was suggested that there is a possibility

that the early Monic and Nicoberese speakers had kept in touch with the migrants from further north whom had moved into the Malay Peninsula.

The linguistic communities believe that there is the existence of a complex palimpsest of loanwords in the Aslian languages also the speakers may no longer reside on the Malay Peninsula. These speakers may be traced back from the archaeological and etymological evidence provided by the existing cultures in that particular region. Matisoff (2013) also mentioned that linguists agreed to Gérard Diffloth that the best name for this group of language is 'Aslian'. Thus, Aslian language are now defined as the languages of Orang Asli which include all of their aboriginal languages but excluding the Austronesian languages spoken by the orang asli of the 'Jakun' or 'aboriginal Malay' group.

The Aslian languages that are recognized by the Malaysian government include (see Figure 2.3) Kensiu, Kintaq, Jahai, Minriq, Batek, Cheq Wong, Lanoh, Temiar, Semai, Jah Hut, Mah Meri, Semaq Beri, Semelai, and Temoq (Benjamin, 1976). However, presently, it was documented that both Senoic languages like Semai and Temiar, are the only language families of the Aslian languages that have over 10,000 speakers.

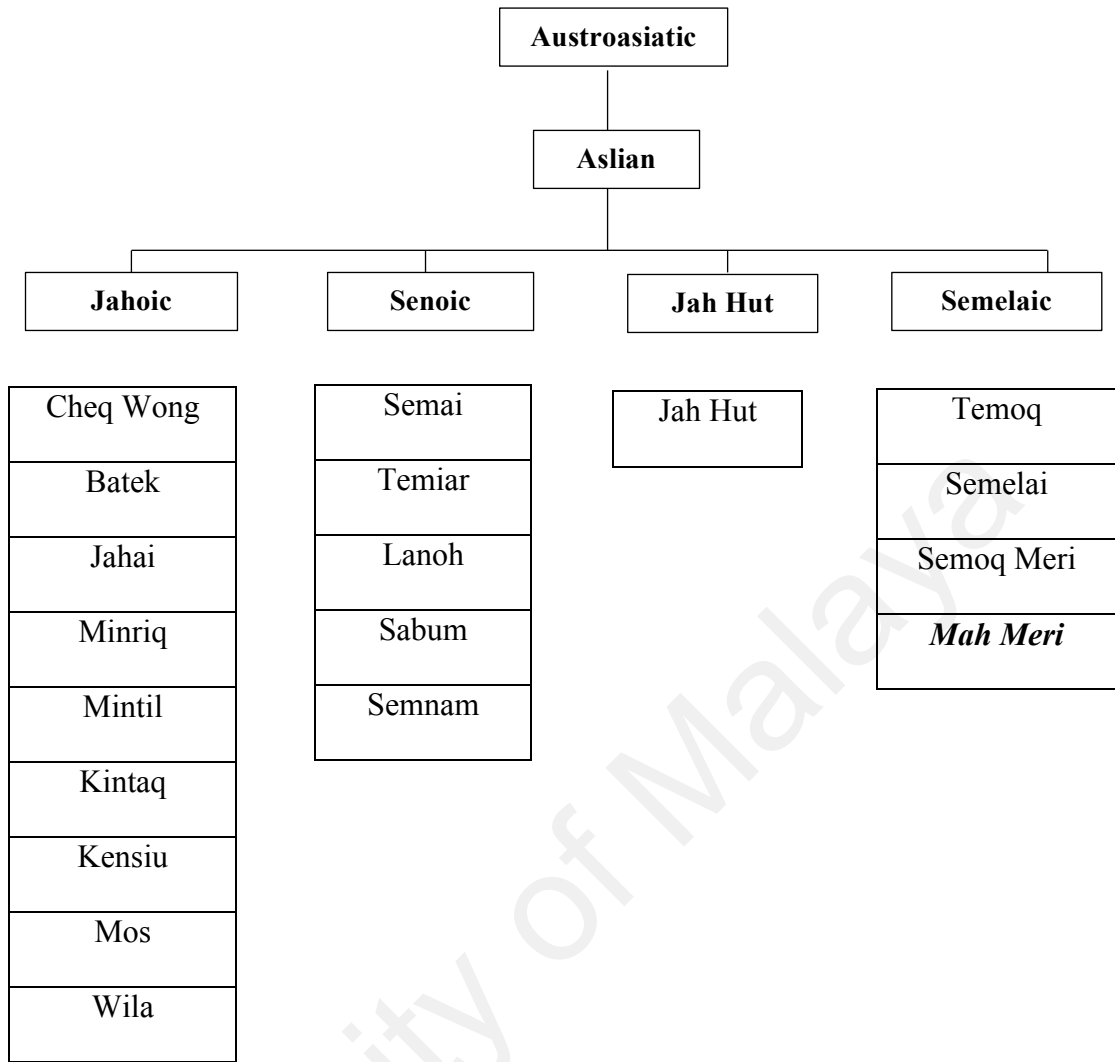


Figure 2.3: The Aslian languages

#### 2.4.1 Studies on Aslian Languages

According to Asmah (1993), the Malaysia's linguistic scenery is quite vast to begin with because the indigenous population in the country are mostly belong to the Austronesian and Austroasiatic language families and the non-indigenous population is mostly consisting of immigrant from China and India. The linguistic attractions on the Orang Asli have gathered the interest of scholars for the last 160 years or so. It was always a major fascination from the beginning that the aboriginal populations settling in the Malay Peninsular are linguistically diverse and the first study has provided a linguistic justification for the dichotomy between the Sakai and Semang, two of the three known racial groups among the Orang Asli. The study was painstakingly conducted in 1901 by Wilhelm Schmidt, who has made a successful comparison in terms of lexical and structural of the languages.

The varieties of languages among the aboriginal groups were then classified as the Malakka-Gruppe in the 50s by Pinnow and renamed as the Aslian languages in the 70s by Gerard Diffloth. Previous studies also had been conducted on the Aslian languages, specifically on the Semelai, Semoq Beri and Mah Meri between 1978 - 2006.

**Table 2.1: List of researches on Aslian languages**

<b>Language</b>	<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Scope</b>
Semelai	Gianno. R	2004	Culture
	Hoe. B.S <i>et.al</i>	2001	Society
	Hood. M.S.	1978	Rituals
	Kruspe. N	2004	Grammar
	Mohala. S	2002	Beliefs
Semoq Beri	Nik Safiah Karim	1979	General Situation
	Kruspe. N	2004	Dialect Varieties
Mah Meri	Kruspe, N	2006	Phonology: Voice Register

From Table 2.1 above, it can be concluded that less study on Mah Meri language has been given special focussed unlike Semelai and Semoq Beri. The Mah Meri language belongs to the first level of the de Swaan's (2002) language system of constellation which only has an oral tradition but lack of the writing system. It is connected to the central language (Malay) because of the exposure of the Mah Meri speakers to the central language through formal education and socialization.

## 2.5 Mah Meri Language

All languages in the world belong to what de Swaan (2002) refers to as one single system which he terms a “global constellation of languages”. Referring to this term, the Mah Meri language is placed on the first level within the De Swaan’s system of constellation. The first level of language constellations is seen as a language that has an oral tradition without a writing system. It also lingers like satellites around the planet of the central language, and in this case, the Malay language.

The first level languages are also connected through the community members who are conversant in both the first level language and the central language. Somehow, these languages are mostly ignored by the ruling body and thus, stays in the oral form only. The central language, on the other hand, belongs to the second level of the language constellation. It secured the status as the official or national language where it is used as the language of administration, education, media and law. As for their attitude towards the Mah Meri language, according to Coluzzi (2016), the Mah Meri people neglect their own language especially those who permanently relocate out of their own communities. Due to this, Coluzzi (2016) added that the second generation are more prone to speak the Malay and English language. As a result this will lead to the dying of the language.

In terms of the first language survival, the first level depends on the satellite resource needs from the central planet. In other words, the greater the need to be more proficient in the central language, the faster the language moves from the first level

language. Another survival threat of the first language is related to the geographical location of the speakers.

In this study, the concern is on the endangerment that the Mah Meri language is facing because the amount of speakers has been reduced to not more than 3000 (Catalogue of the Endangered Languages, 2014). As of 31 December 2003, it was reported by the Department of Orang Asli that there are 2,896 Mah Meri people in Malaysia (Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli, 2004).

In this study, the Mah Meri, or the community under study is situated only 103 kilometres away from the city which in turn made the threat exposure greater. Furthermore, the importance of education within the Mah Meri people is expanding greatly. Therefore, to enable the children to be literate in the central language (Malay language) the children are sent to school where they are assimilating slowly into the dominant Malays. This notion is still a subject of debate as Ramachandaran (2006), Mohamad Subakir (1998) and David (2001) argues that studies done on other languages in Malaysia indicated otherwise such as Portuguese, Javanese and the Sindhi community.

Although the previous studies had documented and recorded the language of the Mah Meri, these studies, however, are more centralized on the origins and the classifications of the language and this can be seen from the works of Sebeok (1943) and Benjamin (1976). Both of the linguists focussed on the Malaysian classification of languages although the syntactic perspective of Mah Meri was not included. On top of that, the syntax of Mah Meri has been studied by Peh and Arshad (1981). A group research

that was lead by Asmah (2006) has also focussed on Mah Meri syntax specially the one studied by Choi within this group. In the research by Asmah (2006), there were several areas of the Mah Meri were investigated such as Kampung Sungai Bumbun in Pulau Carey, Kelang (Peh and Arshad, 1981) and Kampung Bukit Bangkong in Sepang (Choi, 2006).

There was another study that analyses the syntax of the Aslian language that is the Bateq language. The study was conducted by Sultan (2009) and it explored the usage of X-Bar Theory that has been suggested by Chomsky through the Government and Binding (GB) theory. However, the same kind of study was not replicated for the Mah Meri language by any linguists.

### **2.5.1 Endangerment of Mah Meri Language**

The endangerment issue of a language is a major concern as according to Trudgill (1991) and Edwards (1985), whether a mother tongue of any minority group is maintained is often determined by the state of the economy and the social status of a country whether the minority group is situated. Most of the times, the extinction of a language could be orchestrated by the preference for the dominant language or the official language spoken within the area of residency.

However, it may not be the only motivation for a language endangerment or extinction because there are many other major factors including the speakers' attitude towards their native language as well (Trudgill, 1991). Furthermore, Trudgill (1991) also explained that some speakers consider their mother tongue as the lower status



which in turn is they are embarrassed to communicate using that particular language. On the other hand, they regard the dominant language to have higher value both professionally and socially.

Romaine (1995) illustrated that the domain of the language usage and maintenance refers to a sphere of activity representing a combination of specific times, settings and role relationships. Examples of domains are the workplace setting where communication takes place with peer or employers, the school setting in speaking with friends or teachers, the home situation with family members, and religious occasions with God or other devotees.

In this study, the scope of the research stemmed deeply within the language scenario in Malaysia. Since there are 25 identified languages that are in the state of endangered, this study has decided to investigate the Mah Meri language because it has been categorised as severely endangered (see Figure 2.4) by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as reported by Moseley (2010).

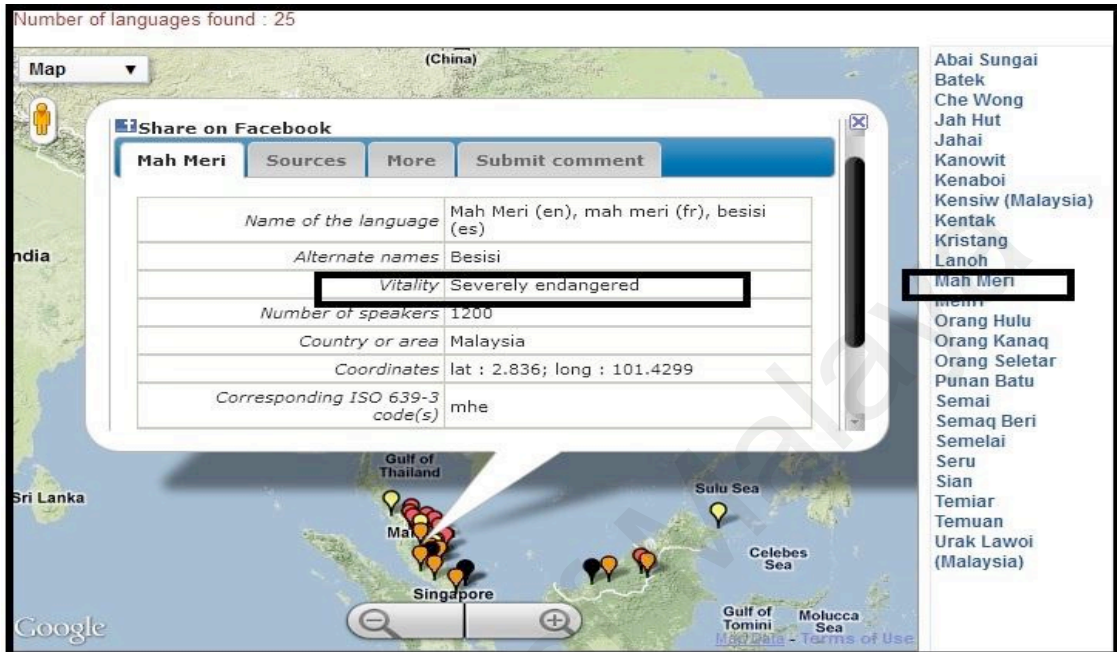


Figure 2.4: Mah Meri as a Severely Endangered Language (Moseley, 2010) - Adapted from UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger

## 2.6 Minimalist Approach

### 2.6.1 Minimalism Term

The term Minimalism has been interestingly reviewed by several scholastic studies and it has been typically linked to certain artistic tendencies. In other words, the term Minimal itself is discussed to be the act of stripping down the term to its most fundamental, simple and basic features. However, within the linguistic agenda that was developed by Noam Chomsky and the other scholars, the term has been awarded with the same aesthetic concern. The concern involves the identification process of the most fundamental elements of the grammatical theory and this study has crucially added a functional commitment to find out the extent where a language can be dubbed as a perfect communication system (Chomsky, 1995) which is a system that is determined by sensorimotor and conceptual-intentional.

In this language faculty, the idea of *conceptual-intentional* refers to the interface conditions that appear along with the considerable elements of “virtual conceptual necessity” which particularly points out the factors of (1) simplicity, (2) elegance, and (3) economy. And this linguistic perfection, according to Chomsky (2001), is an assumption of the Strong Minimalist Thesis (SMT) which should become the guidance to all linguistic theory until proven incorrect.

The theory of grammar namely The Minimalist Program by Chomsky were established to connect between how language is cognitively obtained by an individual and how they are produced to perform a communication. This theory of language was

narrowed by Chomsky as the language of mental property or also known as the language faculty. Dating back to the 1960s, Chomsky differentiate between the ability to speak highlighting that one's performance is very much influenced by the recipient's knowledge of the speaker's way of delivering the language genuinely. (Chomsky, 1965).

The process of acquisition process by every child of L1 acquirer can be seen in the diagram below:



(Jubilado, 2009)

Figure 2.5 Language Acquisition Process

According to Jubilado (2009), Figure 2.5 demonstrates the process of a child's first language acquisition. Primary linguistics data (PLD) is the stage whereby a child is being exposed to their first language by observing. Thus, the language is being absorbed into the Universal Grammar. Jubilado (2009) further added that the last of Particular Grammar (PG) is that it works as the major device in fixing the given parameters in the fashion of 'on' and 'off' manner simply like a switch. Language produced in the PG can be regarded as the product or output of PLD and UG.

Universal Grammar (UG) is the core theory of the MP and the theory of language faculty and language of mental property must integrate with the theory of UG. This

theory by Chomsky is called Universal Grammar which derived from the grammar of *internalized language (I-language)* which means the cognitively internalized linguistics system. Chomsky (1986, p19-56) language system which are internalized in the cognitive of an English native speaker is called the I-language which makes the native speakers proficient in their language. Smith (1999) also supported the theories in Universal Grammar that the I-language the set of linguistics properties that we are born with since birth.

According to Jubilado (2009), Chomsky also added the *externalized language (E-language)* as the production from the I-language (Chomsky 2002:48). E-language can be characterized by one's language performance which is influenced by external factors like environment, psychology, society and other external factor to the human brain. Traditionally, the term performance was known as transformational grammar (Jubilado, 2009). In short, the performance of e-language is the product of I-language where all the grammatical rules are internally stored via the PLD and in the brain.

### **2.6.2 Minimalist Program**

The Minimalist Program manages the lasting inquiry of how to predict a speaker's speech as simple as possible. Chomsky (1995) highlighted that one's dialect, which includes the computational framework, are supported by the two parts of one's cognitive function, which are the brain managing sound and the ability to articulate. These are also known as the perceptual framework and the conceptual-intentional framework. The CHL as in the computational arrangement of human dialect

(cooperates with these "outer" frameworks through two levels of interface namely the, Phonetic Form (PF) and the Logical Form (LF). According to Chomsky (1995), the PF and LF interfaces are usually difficult to interpret, thus, one do not investigate these particular interfaces per say but study the computational framework instead. By spelling out each lexicon accordingly, the grammatical aspects are visible to one's understanding. The utterances is called the determination, taking an individual cluster of lexical components as its info (the NUMERATION), and the two interface representations PF and LF as its yield which are distinctive.

The procedure of determination where the calculation parts is called SPELL OUT (in the past, it was called S-structure). The determination from Spell Out to LF is only a an extension of the determination from the Numeration to Spell Out, with the exemption that no new components can be included from the Numeration. The determination from Spell Out to PF is taken to be profoundly diverse. Spell-out is the procedure to form a structure that can be divided into logical and phonetic forms involving syntactic operation Moves leaving a trace behind. The Logical Form (LF) can be reflected in the computational-intentional system while the Phonetic Form (PF) deals with the articulatory perceptual system (Jubilado, 2009). Chomsky added that the Spell-out stage is responsible for searching the valued uninterpretable features and the deletion due to movements. The movement will leave a deleted trace which is marked with a ~~strikethrough~~ (see Figure 2.8) for example of deleted trace being marked with ~~strikethrough~~)

In the determination, the relations between the components in the Numeration are made unequivocal by connecting the different components up in an expression

structure The significant associations are both topical ( $\theta$ -part ask, predication) and syntactical (Case task, assentation). The topical relations are essential, the syntactic relations are not compulsory, just to be built up by a second structure building operation. Word order variation is the impact of dialects by moving on to the Move stage in distinctive phases of the inference, either before the program of Spell Out .On the other hand in the Spell Out–LF derivation. The deduction is limited by general states of economy, favoring nearby relations and basic structures, and precluding pointless strides and unnecessary images. In these regards, the moderate system is not basically not the same as past adaptations of the hypothesis of generative punctuation but they are simplified clearly. The rough layout of the moderate methodology introduced above might be connected in some structure to every single prior phase of the generative venture.

It is noteworthy, not (by correlation) for what it endeavors to accomplish, yet for the constraints it forces on the best way to accomplish it. Henceforth the end of The Minimalist Program (MP) refers to the the line of inquiry that has been developed inside the Generative Grammar (GG). Initial development of MP emerged in the early 1990s, as initiated by Noam Chomsky in 1993. The paper was a collection of four articles which majorly discussed on the area of (1) Theory of Principles and Parameters co-written with *Howard Lasnik*, (2) Economy of Derivation and Representation, (3) A Minimalist Program for Linguistic Theory, and (4) Categories and Transformations.

Interestingly, MP was presented as a program rather than a theory (Boeckx, 2006), where Chomsky follows the distinct work of Imre Lakatos, a Hungarian philosopher

of mathematics and science. Here, MP provides a conceptual framework that guide the grammatical theory development since it also seeks to be a mode of inquiry which is characterized by the flexibility of the multiple directions enabled by its minimalism. Chomsky believes in the existence of minimalist questions. In other words, the articles deal with the recurrent question of how sound is link to meaning and how some of the discussed elements are related to the previous work of Chomsky on the idea of computational system of human language (CHL) that feeds into the two components of the mind or the articulatory – perceptual system and the conceptual–intentional system.

In general, there are two theoretical goals of MP which it involves the idea of *perfection* and *economy*. Firstly, MP appeals that human's language ability demonstrates signs of being incorporated under an optimal design with exquisite organization, which seems to suggest that the inner workings conform to a very simple computational law or a particular mental organ. According to Boeckx (2006), MP works on the assumption that universal grammar constitutes a perfect design in the sense that it contains only what is necessary to meet our conceptual and physical needs.

Furthermore, from the point of view of the theory and the context of generative grammar, MP appeals on the minimalist approach where the principles and paramaters program is concerned. In fact, it is considered to be the ultimate standard theoretical model developed by the generative linguistic since the 1980s (Carnie, 2006). Through this approach, it was suggested that the existence of a fixed set of principles should be valid across all languages. According to Carnie (2006) again,



when the approach is combined with a finite set of binary switches (parameters), it may describe the specific properties that characterize the language system a child eventually comes to attain.

This idea was elaborated earlier by Webelhuth (1995) where the aims of the Minimalist is to comprehend the extent of which the principles and parameters model may be considered as a result “*hypothetical optimal and computationally efficient design of the human language faculty*”. One by one, more developed versions of the Principles and Parameters approach provide technical principles from which the MP can be seen to follow.

Secondly, the theoretical goal of MP also aims to further develop ideas that involves the *economy of derivation* and *economy of representation*. Also, this notion has begun to become quite significant in the early 1990s, although they were still marginal elements of the transformational grammar (David, 2003). Firstly, the *economy of derivation* refers to the principle which states that movements only happen permissibly when the interpretable features is matched with the uninterpretable features. The example of an interpretable feature can be referred in Table 2.2 which explains the plural inflection on a regular English noun, that is *dogs*.

Table 2.2: Example of an interpretable feature on regular English nouns

Sentences	Intepretation	Assumption
Dogs bite	Many dogs would normally bite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English verbs are inflected according to the number of their subject</li> <li>Information is only interpretable once a relationship is formed between the subject and the verb, so movement of the subject is required.</li> </ul>
A dog bites	A specific dog bite (someone)	

From Table 2.2 above, it can be seen that the word dogs can only be used to refer to several dogs, not a single dog, and so this inflection contributes to meaning, making it interpretable.

The next idea is *economy of presentation* which refers to the principle of grammatical structures that must exist for a purpose. In other words, the sentence structure should not be more complex or larger than required just to satisfy the grammaticality constraints. These are comparable to constraints on the mapping between the interfaces of sensori-motor and conceptual or intentional that exist within the optimal system purposely explored by minimalism.

### 2.6.3 Interface Levels in Minimalist Program

According to Chomsky (2001), the CHL is interacting with the ‘external’ systems through two distinct interface levels that he termed as Phonetic Form (PF) and the Logical Form (LF) and they are often ‘poorly understood’. The sound-meaning link is defined as a derivation where it takes a single array of lexical elements as the needed input, that is called the *Numeration*, and the two interface which representations the *Phonetic Form* and *Logical Form* as its output.

In this case, there is a difference in the two interface representations yet one cannot be derived from the other. Here after, the computation splits which is called the *Spell Out* or the S-structure states the point in the derivation. Next, Chomsky (2001) also explained that the derivation from *Spell Out* to *Logical Form* is seen at the continuation of the derivation from the *Numeration* to *Spell Out*. However, this is made possible with the exception that there are no new elements to be added from the *Numeration*. In terms of the derivation from the *Spell Out* to *Phonetic Form*, it is perceived to be radically different because the link between the elements in the *Numeration* are made explicit by connecting the various elements up in a phrase structure, which is operationally termed as *Merge*. Furthermore, the relevant relations are both thematic, especially in theta-role assignment as well as predication, and syntactic, especially in the Case assignment and agreement.

The most basic relation is the thematic relation while the syntactic relations are secondary where it can only be established by a second structure building operation, which is the *Move*. One of the effects of languages that apply the *Move* operation is

the word order variation. It can happen in different stages of derivation that can either transpire before *Spell Out* in the *Overt Syntax*. It can also happen in the *Spell Out-Logical Form* derivation in the *Covert Syntax*. Moreover, the derivation is restricted by the general conditions of economy which favours the local relations and simple structures. Besides, it is also prohibiting both the superfluous steps and superfluous symbols. Due to these operations, nothing is essentially different between the Minimalist Program from the previous versions of the theory of generative syntax.

Traditionally, in the work of 1960s, clauses were labeled as S (Sentence/Clause) as seen below:

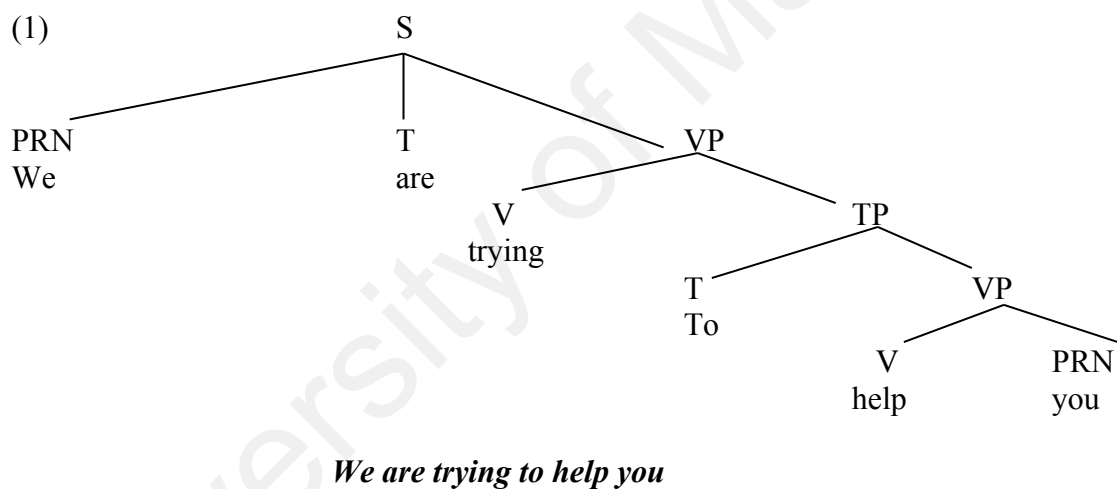
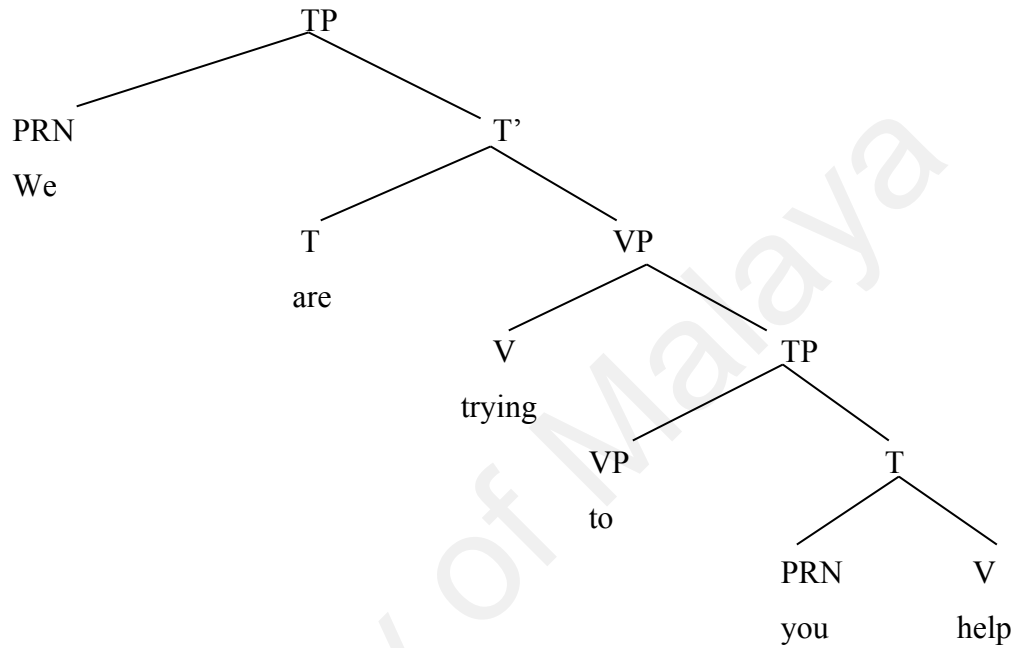


Figure 2.6: A sample of a syntactic structure (Radford, p44 2009)

Now, the trends recognizes the head ‘S’ as ‘TP’. As introduced by Chomsky in the earlier works of UG as the **Extended Projection Principle (EPP)**. Radford (p45 2009) explained the rule of EPP that requires two different projections which are the 1) **maximal projection (TP)** and 2) **intermediate projection (T’)**. A sample of EPP can be seen in the X-Bar Structure in Figure 2.7:

(2)



***We are trying to help 'you help'***

Figure 2.7: A sample of a syntactic structure (Radford, p45 2009)

From the above structure, we can see the **maximal projection** labeled as **TP** as in are followed by the **intermediate projection T'** formed by merging auxiliary *are* with its complement *trying to help you*. This is an example of English language and for other languages; there will still be the form of maximal projection followed by its intermediate projection.

This procedure is also needed when dealing with the compliments of simple transitive predicates containing the subject and object arguments like *read* as seen in a sentence like *He will read the book*, the movement can be seen in the tree structure below:

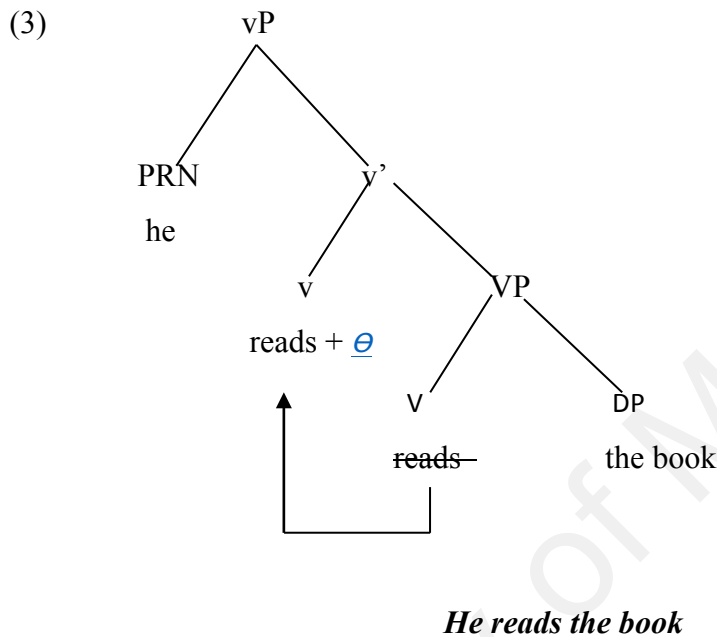


Figure 2.8 Sample of movement in syntactic structure (Radford, p303 2009 cited Chomsky, 1995)

In the above tree structure represents movements as seen in the arrow showing movement of the verb *read* from V to adjoin to a null light verb in V forming a sentence *He read the book*. (Radford, p303 2009 cited Chomsky, 1995).

In order to form a complete tripartite structure of a clause, the next step after V to v movement would be the **T to C Movement**. The C mentioned here represents the complementiser phrase / CP, which are normally occupied by complementiser as *that/for/if*. A sentence showing movement from T to head C as in CP can be seen in the interrogation question form in Figure 2.9

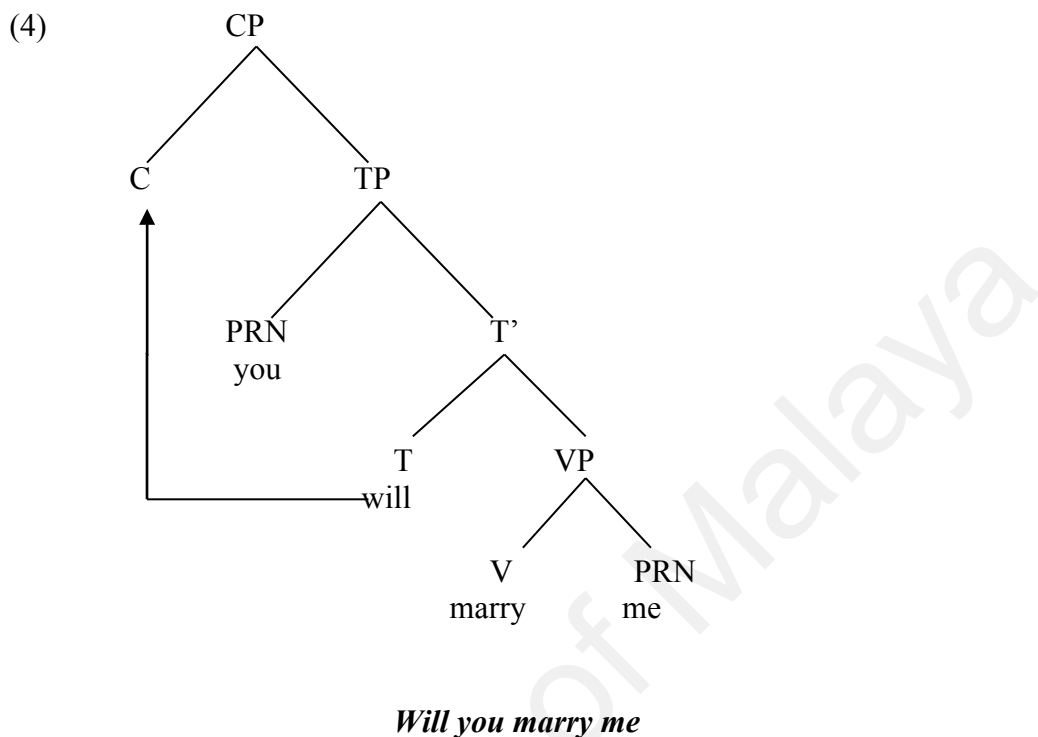
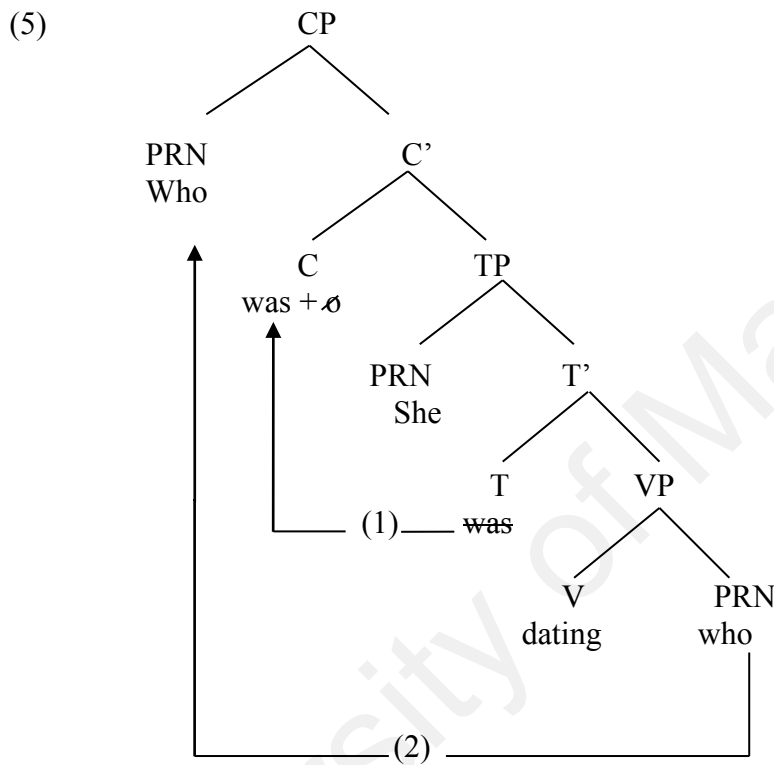


Figure 2.9 Sample of movement in syntactic structure (Radford, p121 2009)

The reason for moving T to C in a main-clause question is simply because C is a strong head in interrogative main clauses in English. For instance, a complete interrogation question like ‘**I wanted to ask [if you will marry me]**’ and the ‘*if*’ is located in the complement clause. Due to this, ‘*if*’ cannot be used to introduce main clauses in English thus movement from T to C is required in this case to ensure that head position C is occupied by the complementiser ‘*if*’.

Following all these movement from V to v and T to C, another type of movement is called **wh-movement** which is also required when the sentences expresses

interrogation. The wh-movement is applicable with the presence of wh-questions like where, when, which, who, when, why and how is also treated as wh-question category (Radford, p152 2009). An example of this category of movement can be seen below:



*Who was she dating*

Figure 2.10 Sample of movement in syntactic structure (Radford, p153 2009)

In the above trees structure we can see that wh-movement occurs after the movement of T to C numbered as (1) according to the arrow of movement adjoining to a null affixal interrogative complementiser  $\emptyset$ .



In understanding **Movements**, there is **V to v Movement** and this process will occur when the head moves to a lighter verb *v* due to the computation of the derivation and the interpretation of the utterance (Jubilado, 2009) as seen in (6) below:

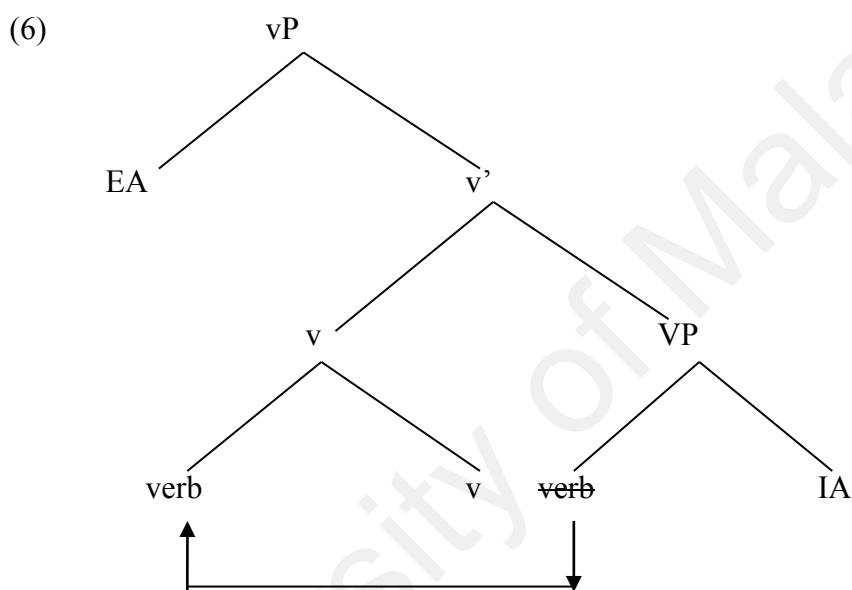


Figure 2.11 Sample of movement in syntactic structure (Jubilado, 2009)

The geometric tree in (6) shows *vP* is the maximal projection of the small *v*. In the above tree structure, EA stands for external argument represents the [Spec, *vP*] which is merged by *v'* and both of them are dominated by *vP*. Moving to the lower part of the tree, the small *v'* dominates both small *v* and *VP* which is sister-preceded by the small *v*. The internal argument of this sentence is labeled as IA. Assuming that the structure is accusative, the *VP* dominates the lexical verb and the IA (Jubilado, 2009).

This procedure is also needed when dealing with the compliments of simple transitive predicates containing the subject and object arguments like read as seen in a sentence like *He will read the book*, the movement can be seen in the tree structure (7) below:

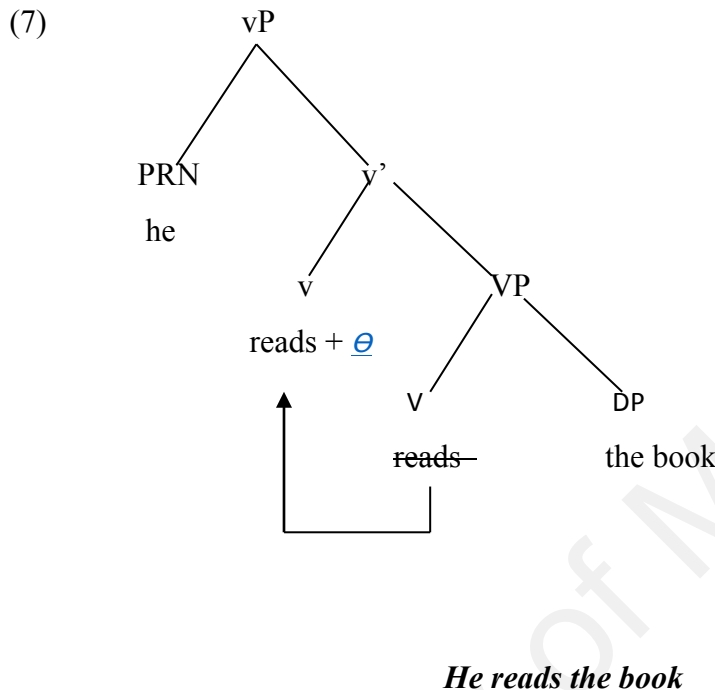


Figure 2.12 Sample of movement in syntactic structure (Radford, p303 2009 cited Chomsky, 1995)

In (7) the tree structure represents movements as seen in the arrow showing movement of the verb read from V to adjoin to a null light verb in V forming a sentence *He read the book*. (Radford, p303 2009 cited Chomsky, 1995). In order to form a complete tripartite structure of a clause, the next step after V to v movement would be the **T to C Movement**. The C mentioned here represents the complementiser phrase / CP, which are normally occupied by complementiser as *that/for/if*. A sentence showing movement from T to head C as in CP can be seen in (8) in the interrogation question form:

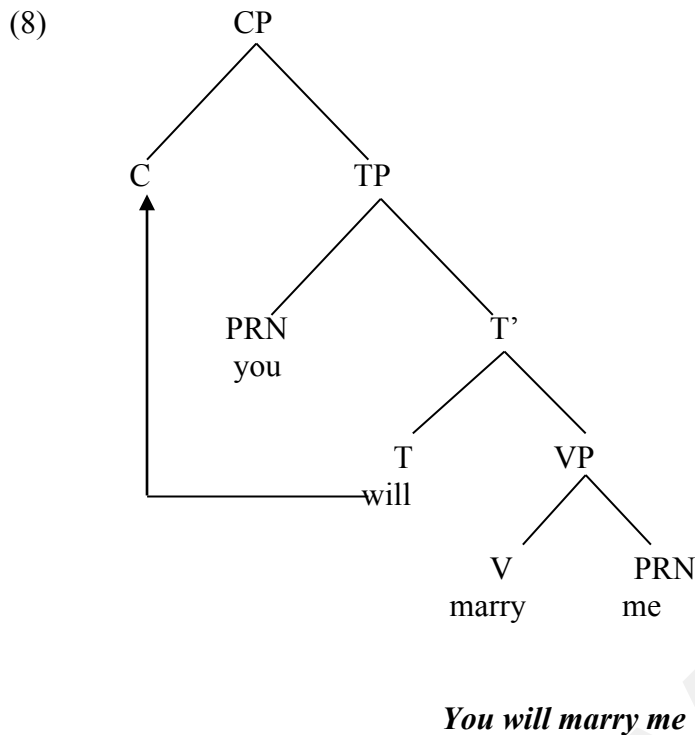


Figure 2.13 Sample of movement in syntactic structure (Radford, p121 2009)

The reason for moving T to C in a main-clause question is simply because C is a strong head in interrogative main clauses in English. For instance, a complete interrogation question like ‘**I wanted to ask [if you will marry me]**’ and the ‘*if*’ is located in the complement clause. Due to this, ‘*if*’ cannot be used to introduce main clauses in English thus movement from T to C is required in this case to ensure that head position C is occupied by the complementiser ‘*if*’.

Following all these movement from V to v and T to C, another type of movement is called **wh-movement** which is also required when the sentences expresses interrogation. The wh-movement is applicable with the presence of wh-questions like

where, when, which, who, when, why and how is also treated as wh-question category (Radford, p152 2009). An example of this category of movement is presented in (9):

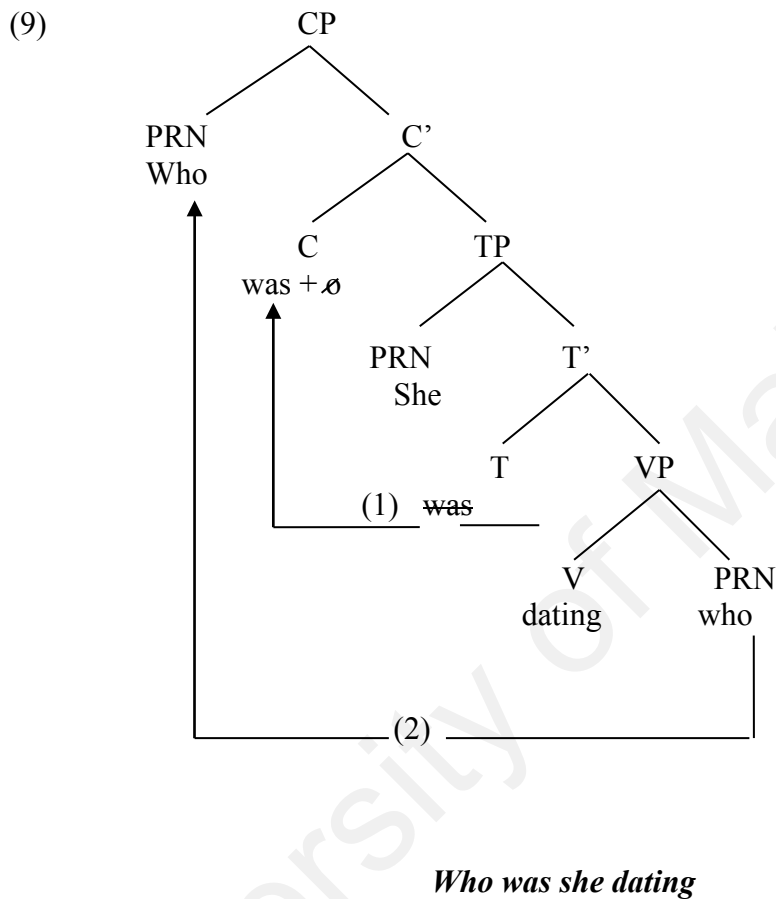


Figure 2.14 Sample of movement in syntactic structure (Radford, p153 2009)

In the above tree structure we can see that wh-movement occurs after the movement of T to C numbered as (1) according to the arrow of movement adjoining to a null affixal interrogative complementiser  $\emptyset$ .

Having said of the syntactic relations, it is crucial to know the syntactic structure. Jubilado (2009) mentioned that the cartography sentential structure is composed of three layers. They are known as the predication layer, the second layer would be the tense layer and the third layer would be the informational layer (periphery of the clause). An example of syntactic structure containing these three layers demonstrating the Malay language structure and movements in an interrogation sentence as in *Wh-movement* and we can also see two movement as in (10):

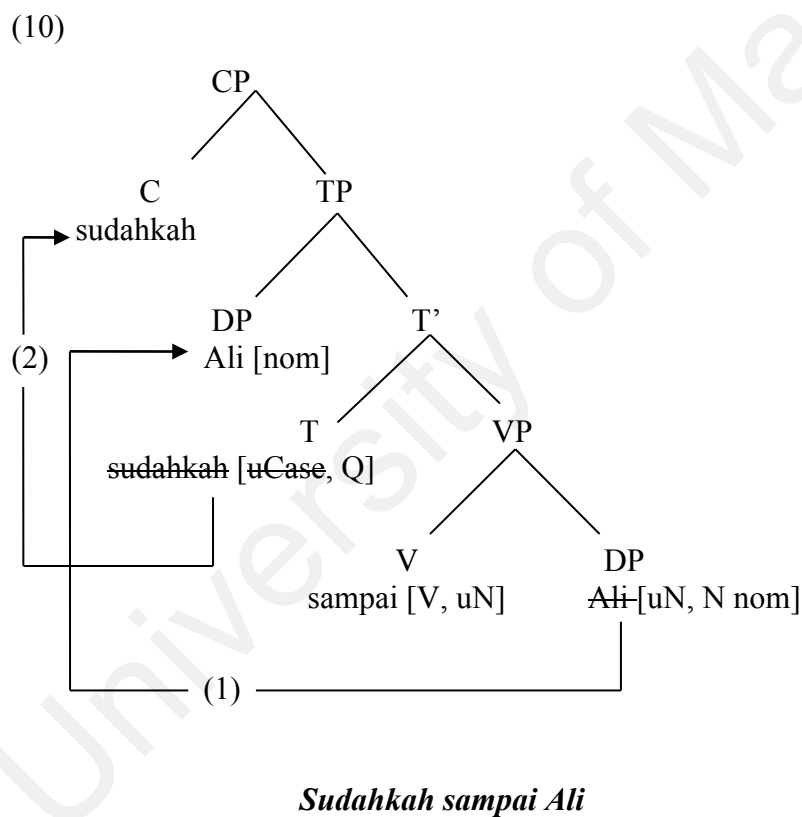


Figure 2.15 Sample of movement in syntactic structure (Jubilado, 2009)

To conclude we can say that there is only 1 computational system that is standardized to all languages but the process of *Merge and Movements* varies according to the grammaticality of the language. As mentioned by Chomsky (1995), there is only a single computational system for human language and only limited lexical variety that can be presented in two operations which are the Merge and Attract / Move in the light of Universal Grammar. These projection or structure, according to Chomsky (1981) must be based on the Projection Principle whereby representations at each syntactic level are projected from the lexicon.

#### **2.6.4 Minimalist Concerns**

Earlier in the study of the Minimalist Approach, Chomsky (1998) has pointed out how the primary questions that attend the minimalist program appear as the principles and the parameters. Also, it indicates the model that has taken shape in the whole process. Chomsky (2001) presented the brief yet illuminating sketch of the development of these principles and parameters model through the previous stages. He has ultimately reached back to the pre-structuralist thinking on the language concept and mind which somehow, emphasis on the continuity of the basic concerns of the generative grammar. These basic concerns are very useful especially because on the surface the minimalist program looks so different from its predecessors.

In discussing the area of concern within minimalist program, a major concern is in terms of the reduction of the computational load especially in carrying out a derivation. However, a natural extension of that particular concern is the reduction of

complexity of the generated objects such as the degree of embedding, without having to sacrifice the expressive power. According to Miller and Chomsky (1963) and Langendoen (1970), when the syntactic transformation was first formulated in the generative grammar, it has reduced the structural complexity of the generated objects to a certain extent. Therefore, they had considered a minimalist update of this idea where the specific form of Merge reduces the structural complexity of the objects it generates.

According to Martin and Uriagereka (2000), the separated path in pursuing the Minimalist Program is emphasized through the establishment of a distinction between methodological minimalism and substantive minimalism. The concern appears in the methodological aspect is more related to the “theory of language” that is still under construction. The substantive aspect, on the other hand, is concern on the quality of the language design.

Based on this, it can be said that the methodological minimalism is looking for the linguistics theory’s components that are redundant, stipulative, and idiosyncratic. This is done to eliminate or reformulate these components based on the parsimonious form and the well-grounded and the general principles. Substantive minimalism, on the other hand, explores on the allegation that the property of language is a genuine property or an apparent property. According to Chomsky (2000), if this allegation is genuine, it satisfies the Strongest Minimalist Thesis, that is, whether it is an optimal solution to the requirements imposed by the external systems.

## 2.7 Government and Binding Theory

Government Binding (GB) Theory is a hypothesis of linguistic use which endeavors to arrange the class of conceivable regular dialects. It does this by setting an arrangement of semantic standards and limitations which are taken to hold all around crosswise over human dialects. This arrangement of standards, the supposed Universal Grammar (UG), is expanded by an arrangement of a particular dialect particular parameters and a dictionary, the Particular Grammar (PG) of a given dialect. What's more, UG and PG together constitute the information which a speaker is said to have when he knows a dialect. UG is thought to be a piece of a characteristic intellectual blessing and along these lines language structure procurement comprises of settling the estimations of a little limited arrangement of parameters.

The central assumption that the major syntactic variation between the grammatical systems is parametric in nature in what Government and Binding Theory is all about. According to Chomsky (1998), via the 'switch setting' process, the grammars from all the natural languages can be derived at some deep level from the Universal Grammar (UG). In the case of the switch setting process, Universal Grammar is halfway similar to a switchboard with its switches in impartial position for instance Chomsky mentioned children know ahead of time about the conceivable courses however they need to discover which specific choice has been chosen by the dialect they are adapting Once they find this, they flick every switch and the framework capacities Chomsky concentrates on childrens' exclusions for proof by the use of inadequate



articulations .The brief kind of expression frequently interchanges with longer ones leaving out the subject Pronouns (I, he , etc.) and assistant verbs (am, is, etc.)

Gradually, children achieve a point in development when they see the presence of such items. Furthermore, in the Government and Binding Theory, several principles had been proposed and each is based on the high-level empirical generalisations such as (1) the empty category principle, (2) subjacency, (3) binding theory, (4) Case theory, and (5) theta-theory.

### **Empty Category Principle**

The empty category principle (ECP) is supposed to be a Universal syntactic limitation that requires certain sorts of void class, in particular follows, to be appropriately represented or governed. ECP is a principle of transformational grammar by which they should be identifiable as vacant positions in the surface structure. In this way a void class is in a position subcategorized for by a verb. In government and binding theory, this is known as appropriate government. Legitimate government happens either if the void position is represented by a lexical classification (particularly in the event that it is not a subject) (theta-government) or on the off chance that it is coindexed with a maximal projection which oversees it (antecedent- government). The ECP has been changed ordinarily and is presently a focal piece of government and binding theory.

## **Subjacency**

Subjacency however is the general syntactic locality constraint on movement. It specifies restrictions placed on movement and regards it as a strictly local process. The principle expresses that no development can move an element over more than one bounding node at a time. In more recent frameworks, bounding nodes which are hurdles to movement are AgrP (Agreement Phrase) and DP (Determiner Phrase) (S and NP in Chomsky's definition respectively). Therefore, Subjacency condition limits movement by defining bounding nodes. It also accounts for the fact that all movements are local.

## **Binding Theory**

Binding theory provides constraints on the coreference potential outcomes of nominal components. These nominal components are separated into three classes which are (1) *Anaphors*, (2) *Pronouns* and (3) *R-expressions*. The class of anaphors is made out of reflexives, similar to herself, or reciprocals, similar to each other. Pronouns are words like We or him. R-expressions are either positive or inconclusive portrayals or names. Presently, restricting hypothesis expresses the accompanying:

- a) Anaphor is bound in its governing category
- b) Pronoun is free in its governing category
- c) R-expression is free everywhere

Binding is characterized as:

A binds B if and just if A *C-commands* B and A and B are *co-indexed*.

The element is free on the off chance that it is not bound. Government theory are defined as the governing category for X if and just if an is the insignificant class containing X, a legislative head of X, and a SUBJECT open to X. Around, an available SUBJECT is the subject of either a condition or a DP (on account of a genitive) which c-commands that element and fulfills some extra properties. The key understanding in the coupling hypothesis is that the limitations or constraints ought to be expressed as far as disjoint reference (a component must be free) and not regarding prerequisites on reference.

Examples which the theory represents include:

- i. He feels that Andy is an idiot
- ii. Andy; needs him to leave the gathering
- iii. Andy needs himself to leave the gathering
- iv. Andy realizes that he exited the gathering
- v. Mike preferes Stu's composition of himself
- vi. Mike likes the work of art of himself

The examples (i-vi) shows that the R-expression Andy is bound by the subject pronoun him, a condition A infringement. The pronoun him is bound by Andy. The overseeing classification for the pronoun is the entire clause since the nearest available subject is the subject of the grid condition. Hence, it is a condition B violation. An anaphor similarly situated as the pronoun must be bound in its representing class and thus particular sentence '*Andy realizes that he exited the gathering*' is syntactic. The overseeing classification for the anaphor is the whole IP since there is no available subject. In any case, the sentence '*Mike preferes Stu's composition of himself*', the genitive DP Stu capacities as an open subject and a condition A infringement results.

### **Case Theory**

Case theory manages a conceptual syntactic property which holds of DPs. These components are allotted a property of Case in certain basically characterized setups. Case is an reflection of the well known linguistic thought. Thus, the absence of plain case morphology in english does not block the likelihood that a DP has been Case marked. According to Jubilado (2009), the Cases can be assigned simply by following the relationship of sisterhood and this relationship is linguistically termed as *Government* and is outlined as follows:

### 2.4.5 Government

$\alpha$  governs  $\beta$  if and only if

- a)  $\alpha$  is an  $X^0$  category
- b)  $\alpha$  c-commands  $\beta$

To understand the concept c-command in the government, C-command is defined as follows:

- a) the first branching node dominating  $\alpha$  also dominates  $\beta$
- $\beta$ )  $\alpha$  does not dominate  $\beta$

(Jubilado, 2009)

Chomsky (1965) highlighted c-category as the theory of sub-categorization selection for syntactic category. Chomsky further added that the non-semantic features in complementation can be seen in predicates linked to phrase structure. In this coordination, a predicate which allows an optional NP as its sister is marked with [+ \_\_\_(NP)] on the right. However, Chomsky added that this rule does not apply to some languages like the Japanese language whereby a Japanese predicate is taken into comparison and resulted that an optional NP with [(NP) \_\_\_] on the left instead of the right as in an English predicate.

Government is basically a local version of command, and it plays a central role in almost all modules of grammar in the principles-and-parameters approach. But even in the principles-and-parameters framework government has always had an elusive character as mentioned by Aoun and Sportiche (1983) which fuelling the suspicion that 'government' is not a unified concept, but a label covering highly diverse

grammatical relations for early discussion of this problem. Thus, government covers the head–complement relation and the head–specifier relation, two entirely different configurations.

The Government is also defined as a relation between a *Head* and a dependent element and also as the relation between a moved *Non-head* and its trace or also known as the *antecedent government* which still described in terms of binding in (Chomsky, 1981). Furthermore, government is used for thematic licensing such as the theta-role assignment and formal licensing such as the Case assignment, for determining local domains for binding which is the governing category and extraction such as the barriers, via the notion theta-government, and for deriving the distribution of PRO via the PRO-theorem, stating that PRO must be ungoverned.

The implementations of the notion government are largely evaporated even within the principles and parameters approach. This could happen even when the term is continuously used. Therefore, within the core case of government, the head-complement relation which also involved in the theta role assignment may be reduced to the more primitive relation. What also happen does involve the emergence of the specifier-head relation in the principles and parameters framework. In this case, the relation acts as the designated formal licensing relation especially in the structural Case which includes the Exceptional Case-marking and the ‘Null Case’ that licenses PRO. However, there are no similarities between the traditional notion of government and the specifier-head relation. Somehow, they seem to contribute to generative grammar.

## Theta theory

Theta theory is proposed to represent the sensible thought of topical and contention structure inside GB hypothesis. The items which theta theory is concerned with are theta parts and theta networks. The purpose of the theta theory as according to Jubilado (2009) is to study the grammatical relation of NP to the verb by converting the thematic relation to the verbs and the theta role is also the semantic roles carried by the argument relation to the verb. Traditionally, Chomsky (1981) mentioned that the thematic properties are used to be known as the criteria of  $\theta$  and each argument is entitle to only one  $\theta$ -role. Theta parts are the semantic relations which holds between a predicate and its contentions. Case of these incorporate such things as agent, area, experiencer, source, subject. The lexical section of a predicate contains a theta lattice which indicates the theta parts allocated by that predicate. A theta lattice is a kind of subcategorization casing. It is a requested rundown of theta parts allocated by the predicate alongside a particular of the route in which these parts must be linguistically figured out. The theta matrix may, for occurrence, determine that a given theta part is to be acknowledged by a component of sort DP in direct protest position. One of the theta parts in a theta network is generally recognized and called the outer theta parts. The others are called interior theta parts.

However, the common operations that are used in combining the elements are subjected to X theory and also the projection principle. Also, the tree structures that are unsolicited will be filtered out at the Surface-structure, Phonetic Form and the Logical Form by the general principles mentioned earlier. All these are relying

significantly on the complex “descriptive technology” such as the government, and on language specific filters or parameter settings.

The idea which indicates that the distribution of nominal is ruled by specific laws of linguistic has become one of the major discussions in the 70s. Chomsky and Lasnik (1977) for example, managed to gather a structured list of syntactic contexts where the NPs in languages are still a debatable question. The English’s NP, for example, is still experiencing an open argument on why the restrictions should either be disallowed or heavily restricted. However, in 2006, Vergnaud had addressed a letter to Chomsky and Lasnik which proposed that the concerned restrictions in language, such as English, are probably linked to another special cross-linguistic property specific to nominal.

The much spoken restrictions may include the presence of special morphology that could shape the correlation it has with the syntactic position. This may also be called as the case morphology. In his study too, Vergnaud has also observed the distribution of several kinds of case morphology on nominal in Latin, for instance, where matching distribution of nominal in English is sparse or non-existent.

In explaining this, several examples are provided based on some languages such as Latin, Russian, Japanese and others, where *Accusative (ACC)* can be found. In cases like these languages, the ACC can be found on V as the complements and on P, sometimes. However, it can’t be found on the complements of N and A. Furthermore, the complement of N and A may either bears a different type of case affix that is



genitive morphology. If it doesn't appear so, it must appear as a PP and they never appear as a bare nominal.

## **2.8 PRO and Null Case**

According to Huang (1989), the study of pro-drop revolves around few significant questions (a) what is their distribution across languages (b) what are their referential properties and (c) how may their distribution and reference be properly accounted for within an optimal theory of grammar. In the 80s, Chomsky's and many other linguistics scholars, there had been several mentioned of PRO and pro. PRO is defined as the pronominal anaphor, while pro is termed as pure pronominal.

In terms of its appearance, PRO is presumably universal where within each language, the occurrence is quite restricted to the subject position of a non-finite clause and this is the based for this study. Furthermore, this situation is assumed to follow two conditions within the Binding Theory of Chomsky (1981), namely the PRO theorem which occurs only in an ungoverned position. Subsequently, the reference of PRO is assumed to fall under a separate theory of control.

Chomsky (1995) and Lasnik (1993) contend convincingly that PRO has Case. They further suggest that, as opposed to standard suspicions, even nonfinite T checks Case. One issue for this supposition, not withstanding, is the invalid possibility of lexical subjects in numerous control infinitivals.

- a. Sheila attempted Steve to study physics.
- b. Sheila persuaded Sarah Steve to study physics.
- c. It is not easy Steve to study physics.

### 2.8.1 Differences between PRO and pro

Respectively, there are two elements of PRO suggested by Chomsky (1982) and they are called PRO (big pro) and *pro* (small pro). PRO is assumed to be a pronominal anaphor, and *pro* a pure pronominal. The occurrence of the PRO is presumably universal. Within each language the occurrence of PRO is limited on the subject position of a non-finite clause. This is assumed to follow from conditions A and B of the Binding Theory by Chomsky (1981), namely from the "PRO theorem" that it occurs only in an ungoverned position. The reference of PRO is assumed to fall under a separate theory of control.

The empty category subclass called PRO, alluded to as "big pro" when talking, is a DP which shows up in a caseless position. Since PRO is a caseless DP, it can show up in caseless positions, for example, the specifier of a non-limited tense expression. It represents non-limited installed statements. This example does not utilize PRO, but rather utilizes a clear pronoun rather ("you") as in *She would like you to leave*.

This example uses PRO, on the grounds that there is an unfilled classification which is co-referenced with "He" which shows up in the specifier position of the non-limited embedded clause as in *She would like PRO to leave*.

PRO takes the subject position of the non-limited proviso. Significance can be dictated by its controller (the subject of the framework provision) despite the fact that it does not need to be. Expert can either be controlled ("obligatory control") or uncontrolled ("optional control"). The acknowledgment that PRO does not act precisely like a R-Expression, an anaphor, or a pronoun prompted the conclusion that it must be a class all by itself. It can occasionally here and there be bound, is now and then co-referenced in the sentence, and does not fit into the Binding theory.

**"Little pro"** happens in a subject position of a finite clause and has case. The DP is "dropped" from a sentence if its reference can be recovered from the setting. Spanish is a case of a language with rich subject-verb morphology that can permit null subjects. The individual stamping on the verb in Spanish permits the subject to be distinguished regardless of the possibility that the subject is absent from the spoken type of the sentence. This does not occur in English due to its devastated subject-verb morphology. Chinese is a case of a Pro-drop language. Both subjects and questions can be dropped from the purported a portion of finite sentences, which implies that what is clear from the setting does not need to be expressed, driving it to be marked as a discourse oriented language. In Pro-drop languages, the secret "Pro" replaces an obvious Pronoun, so one winds up with sentences that do not have a subject or protest affirmed all alone. They are comprehended in view of different things, (for example, verbal morphology or discourse. The circulation of pro drop can be anticipated: a pronoun may drop from a given sentence just if certain critical parts of its reference can be recuperated from different parts of the sentence.

This example illustrates how a Chinese question would be asked with Wang Lee as the subject and Chung Li as the object:

*Wang Lee kanjian Chung Li le ma?*

*Wang Lee see Chung Li ASP Q?*

*'Did Wang Lee see Chung Li?'*

The following illustration is the reaction to the question. Both subject and the object are null categories. The significance of the sentence can be effectively recovered despite the fact that the pronouns are dropped. (Round sections demonstrate an optional component):

(ta) kanjian (ta) le.

(He) saw (him).

The occurrence of *pro*, unlike that of PRO, is not universal across languages. English and French, for example, do not allow a null subject within a finite clause. Languages like Italian and Spanish, on the other hand, allow a null subject within a finite clause. An important question that arises is then how to properly characterize the Pro-Drop or Null Subject Parameter. According to Chomsky (1982), the distribution of Pro-drop is assumed, following Taraldsen (1978), to be determined by the principle of recoverability, or what Jaeggli (1982) terms the 'identification hypothesis'. The idea is that a pronoun may drop from a given sentence only if certain important aspects of its reference can be recovered from other parts of the sentence. In a language like Italian or Spanish, the subject of a finite clause may drop, because the agreement

marking on a finite verb is sufficiently rich to recover important aspects of, or determine, the reference of a missing subject.

However, in a language like English, Pro-drop is prohibited from the subject position of a finite clause, because its agreement markings are to sufficiently determine the reference of a missing subject. Furthermore, because the finite verb is marked only for agreement with the subject but not with the object, the identification hypothesis correctly predicts that no object may drop, either in the English type or in the Italian type of languages. The hypothesis also claims that if a language has a way of marking the verb with sufficient features of agreement with the object, Pro-drop may also occur with the latter.

### **2.8.2 The Null Parameter**

In the Government and Binding theory, a specific degree of variation within language is permitted to anyone from various universal statements. Some assumptions suggest that any language selects just one of the small number of choices that are permitted by the theory of grammar. To determine whether a language is a pro-drop language or not is called the parameter. There are three examples of parameter that are commonly investigated which are the (a) Head Parameter, (b) Adjacency Parameter, and (c) Pro-Drop Parameter.

These parameters specify some choices that are not elaborated in the Universal Grammar. Therefore, the values of the parameters are not genetically fixed. Due to this, the language acquisition becomes the process of parameter setting because the

diversity of the linguistic elements are characterized based on the values of the parameters. The null subject parameter can be seen as an example. Certain languages such as Italian and Spanish are some obvious examples that have this situation where the sentences have no overt subject as compared to English, a language with an overt subject. Therefore, in the parameter theory, an explanation for the systematic syntactic variation between languages and imposes restrictions on the number of choices which the language learner has to make.

In the case of a Pro-drop language, a positive setting of the parameter allows an empty pro-element to be identified by its governor. The term parameter is also used in government and binding theory especially for a specification of the types of variation that a principle of grammar which manifests among different languages. However, there are several suggestions that the rules of grammar do not exist in the traditional sense. They are only principles and can take a slight difference between language. Since the parameters varies in different languages, it defines some limitations. In explaining further on the parameter, several examples are provided.

- A *head parameter* specifies the positions of heads within phrases.

Table 2.3: Example of head parameter

<b>Language</b>	<b>Head parameter</b>
<i>English</i>	Head-first
<i>Japanese</i>	Head-last

- An *adjacency parameter* of case theory specifies whether case assigners must be adjacent to their noun phrases

Table 2.4: Example of adjacency parameter

<b>Language</b>	<b>Adjacency Parameter</b>
<i>English</i>	to the left
<i>Chinese</i>	to the right

The scholars of the second language acquisition have studied the consequences of parameter changes within the native language from the target language. The issue in question is on whether the parameter needs to be reset in the mentioned situation. The study on this condition has been investigated in the acquisition of the Spanish language, which is a Pro-drop language, especially by the speakers of non-Pro-drop language such as English and French.

Radford (2009) outline this parameter as any finite verb can either have an overt subject like *Maria* or a null *pro* subject. Unlike the English language, the above example is only applicable for the Italian language. In English, although a finite verb is allowed to have overt subject like *Maria*, but they cannot normally have a null *pro* subject. For instance, *Maria thinks that speak French* is ungrammatical because the verb *speak* has a null subject (Radford, p23 2009). Thus, in short the condition of null subject varies according to different languages but to some languages if we use the same structure as others, the sentence would be ungrammatical.

### 2.8.3 PRO-Drop or Null Subject

Whether the subject of a clause can be suppressed or not is determined by the pro-drop or null subject. Thus, the process of determining the parametric values for any given languages is termed as the parameter settings. The principles and parameters theory (PPT) refers to the overall approach within the universal grammar. Not only that it has been applied internally, it has also been applied outside of the syntactic contexts especially in the characterization of phonological relationship. Later versions of metrical phonology, for example, recognize a series of parameters governing the way metrical feet should be represented, such as quantity sensitivity and directionality.

The pro-drop parameter and the other parameters of the Universal Grammar has always been the interest of many child language acquisition and language teaching scholars. In terms of the term pro-drop, it is used because in the d-structure of the grammar, the empty subject position is filled by the element pro. Several languages such as Italian and Arabic appear to have subject-less declarative sentences and this situation is an example of a pro-drop language (see Table 2.5 and 2.6).

Table 2.5: Example of pro-drop languages (subject-less declarative)

Language	Example Sentence		Translation (English)	
	<i>Subject (Missing)</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Verb</i>
Italian	<i>lui</i>	<i>parla</i>	he/she	speaks/talks
Arabic	<i>huwa</i>	<i>yatakalamu</i>		



However, besides English, language such as French and German do not typically omit the subject in declarative sentences and they are referred to as non-Pro-drop languages.

Table 2.6: Example of non pro-drop languages

Language	Example Sentence		Translation (English)	
	<i>Subject (Missing)</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Verb</i>
Italian	<i>lui</i>	<i>parla</i>	he/she	speaks/talks
Arabic	<i>huwa</i>	<i>yatakalamu</i>		

PRO is described by Radford (p400, 2009) as the Null case pronoun which represents the understood subject that does not necessarily has to be present in the predicate of a sentence. For example:

- (a) *John* decided [**PRO** to leave]
- (b) *John* wants [**PRO** to prove himself]

The above structure (a) indicates that PRO need not to be present in the sentence yet the meaning conveyed is understood by the recipient. Radford (2009) also explained in (b) that the **PRO** in the predicate of the sentence is controlled by *John* which means *John* is the antecedent of PRO.

According to Radford (p85, 2009) PRO can be categorized into three which are *discourse controller*, *arbitrary reference* and *partially controlled* depending on the content of utterances. The following sentences are examples of these three categories by Radford (2009):

- (a) Discourse controller: *It's vital [PRO to prepare myself properly for the exam]*
- (b) Arbitrary reference: *It's important [PRO to take oneself too seriously]*
- (c) Partially controlled:
  - i) *John didn't want [PRO to get themselves in trouble]*
  - ii) *John proposed [PRO to become partners]*
  - iii) *John wanted [PRO to work together]*

In the above example (a), PRO is commonly found in utterances by a speaker which led to a conversion of antecedent '*myself*' to '*I*'. When PRO refers to some entity within the discourse indirectly in a sentence, the phrase is identified as discourse controller. In (b), PRO is classified into arbitrary reference because the lexical '*oneself*' refers to any random person as in sentences like '*One can't be too careful these days*'. In (c), PRO is a third person plural subject as in '*themselves*', '*partners*' and '*together*' thus these sentences are classified as partially controlled. (Radford, p85-86, 2009).

## 2.9 The Non-Finite T Phrases

### 2.9.1 Two Types of Non-Finite Tense

According to Stowell (1982), there is a Case distinction between (a) raising infinitive and (b) control infinitive. In the study, Stowell (1982) has characterized the interpretive dissimilarities in terms of the feature [ $\pm$ tense] where the control infinitives are [+tense] whereas the raising infinitives are [-tense]. At the end, this provides a natural characterization for the proposed Case distinction between the control infinitive and the raising infinitive too: [+tense] checks Case.

### 2.9.2 Raising Infinitive.

In raising infinitive, Stowell (1982) suggests that the interpretation within the raising infinitive is different. The elements of the raising infinitive are seen in Table 2.5 where the event time of the infinitive is similar to or simultaneous with that of the matrix.

In Table 2.7, the sentence is considered to be true if at some past time/interval  $t$  where *Zelda* believed that *William* was the best at or during  $t$ . It cannot mean that at some past time/interval  $t$ , *Zelda* believed that *William* would be / becomes the *best* at some future time/interval  $t$ .

Table 2.7: Examples of the Raising Infinitive

No	Examples
2.5a	Zelda believed William to be the best
2.5b	The doctor showed Steven to be sick.
2.5c	The defendant seemed to the DA to be guilty

(Stowell, 1982)

### 2.9.3 Control Infinitive

In control infinitive, it is observed that the temporal properties are not similar from those of the raising infinitive. In fact, in some sense, the *event time* of control infinitive is unrealized or future with the respect to that of the matrix (see Table 2.8i).

In example (2.8ia) it can be observed that the verb *remembering* precedes biscuits bringing.

The same situations are also detected in example (2.8ib) where *Adam* has been convinced (*verb*) to go to the *library* in the future; and in example (2.8ic) where the buying of a *new computer* is as yet unrealized.

Table 2.8i: Example of Control Infinitive

No	Examples
2.8ia	Jennifer <i>remembered</i> to bring the biscuits.
2.8ib	Adam <i>convinced</i> Edward to go to the library.
2.8ic	Robert <i>wants</i> to buy a new computer.

Based on the studies conducted by Stowell (1982) and Bresnan (1972), it is assumed that [+tense] that exist in the Control Infinitive is illustrated in future-oriented sense. Nonetheless, the tensed infinite clauses are different in several ways from the Finite sentences with will. Martin (2001) argues that the tense in the control infinitive is indeed always a modal element. However, that situation could only agree closely to would or sometimes in should (Martin, 1996).

Table 2.8ii: Examples of Control Infinitive

No	Examples
2.8iia	Jennifer <i>remembered</i> that she will bring the biscuits.
2.8iib	Adam <i>convinced</i> Edward that he will go to the library.

In Table 2.8ii, not only must *biscuits-bringing* follow *remembering*, it must also occur after speech time, as indicated by Stowell (1993) and Uribe-Etxebarria, 1994).

If comparison is to be made, no restriction is identified in Table 2.8i. In fact, the embedded event time, although future with respect to the matrix event time may be prior to speech time. It should also be noted that *would* behaves like Non-finite tense in this respect (Table 2.8iii).

Table 2.8iii: Examples of Control Infinitive

No	Examples
2.8iiiia	Jennifer <i>remembered</i> that she would bring the biscuits.
2.8iiiib	Adam <i>convinced</i> Edward that he would go to the library.

The future orientation of non-finite tense might also explain its general incompatibility with perfective aspect.

Table 2.8iv: Examples of Control Infinitive

No	Examples
2.8iva	Jennifer <i>remembered</i> to have bought the biscuits
2.8ivb	Adam <i>convinced</i> Edward to have gone to the library.

Although no such restriction exists with *will*, as in (2.8v), a similar tension is manifest with *would*, as in (2.8vi).

Table 2.8v: Examples of Control Infinitive

No	Examples
2.8va	Jennifer <i>remembered</i> that she will have bought the biscuits ( <i>by the time she goes to bed this evening</i> ).
2.8vb	Adam <i>convinced</i> Edward that he will have gone to the library ( <i>by the time he goes to bed this evening</i> ).

Table 2.8vi: Examples of Control Infinitive

No	Examples
2.8via	Jennifer <i>remembered</i> that she would have bought the biscuits ( <i>by the time she goes to bed this evening</i> ).
2.8vib	Adam <i>convinced</i> Edward that he would have gone to the library ( <i>by the time he goes to bed this evening</i> ).

The interpretation of control infinitive corresponds most closely to that of finite sentences containing modals, notably *would* as seen in Table 2.8 vi.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

The research methodology chapter describes the methods used in collecting data and empirical information. It describes the (1) Research Objective, (2) Research Design, (3) Research Location, (4) Research Instrument, (5) Data Collection, (6) Sampling Selection, (7) Research Sample, (8) Methods for analysing data and provides the (9) Limitation of the study.

#### 3.2 Research Objectives

The existence and non-existence of Pro-drop and Null case in languages has always been the major interest of linguistics studies, especially in the effort to preserve the language. The Mah Meri language, with its limited speakers, is at the brink of endangerment and further understanding of the language is critically needed.

Therefore, the study is done with the aim to justify the existence or non-existence of the Pro-drop and Null Case in the Mah Meri language to assist in the preservation of the language as well as to contribute to the documentation of Syntax study.

### **3.3 Research Methodology**

#### **3.3.1 Research Design**

The research design utilized in conducting this study is by combining library research and also field research. Library research includes the references from previous researchers in the field of this study which is the Null case and PRO study and the Mah Meri language. Meanwhile, the field research involved interviews and self-made questions relevant to this study. In this case, the research design opted by this study is the theory of Minimalist Program by Noam Chomsky in attempt to investigate the Mah Meri language specifically in the community of Kampung Sungai Bumbun.

The goal of this research is to discover the possibilities of the existence of the the Null case and PRO in Mah Meri phrases. The main medium of analyzing the data collected by using the Minimalist Approach by Chomsky and thorough description will be explicated throughout this thesis. Finally, the last stage includes the explanatory phase whereby findings will be explained in great detail, demonstrated using the tree syntactic structure and issues like research gaps suggestion for future research will be included as well.

In studying the Null Case and PRO and its' syntactic properties, interviews were deemed as the most suitable method as the interviewee's utterances would be natural. As mentioned by Asmah (2008) the study of pure linguistics like morphology, phonology or syntax need not a large number of participants and she further suggested that one or two participants would be sufficient to collect adequate data. Thus, this study only requires one interviewee. As this study attempts to analyze the Null Case



and PRO, all Mah Meri individual would utter the same sentence structure since it is their native language.

### **3.3.2 Research Location**

For this research, the ideal location for collecting the evidence has been identified to be located at Kampung Sungai Bumbun in Pulau Carey, Klang which is in the state of Selangor, Peninsular Malaysia. It is situated at the south of Klang Port and the north of Banting in Selangor.

Named after Valentine Carey, a British officer during the early Malayan era, Pulau Carey is synonymously known for the Mah Meri settlement. The Mah Meri in Kampung Sungai Bumbun is estimatedly occupied by approximately 1400 people who are known to have detailed craftsmanship including wooden tribal masks and sculpture.

### **3.3.3 Research Instrument**

For this study, an interview was conducted between the researcher and the participant. To accommodate in depth and further understanding on the research objectives, the interview questions are designed with extra care to ensure the understanding of the question by using straightforward wording.

Also, the instructions are provided earlier to obtain excellent quality data and the informant is encouraged to ask when he has difficulties to understand the interview

questions. Furthermore, during the visit to the Carey Island, two other researchers worked together in interviewing the Tok Batin of Kampung Sungai Bumbun. The interview was recorded using the MP3 recorder.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

In any research project, data collection is incredibly significant as several aspects come into play in the process of collecting data (Wyse, 2014). In this study, three most vital aspects are observed which are (1) the cost of the selected data collection method; (2) the accuracy of data collected and (3) the efficiency of data collection. List of the interview questions (see Appendix B) are geared to the theme of this research which is the Null Case and PRO.

#### **3.4.1 Sampling Selection**

The prerequisites of the sampling selection require the researcher to fulfil certain criteria such as (1) age, (2) native speaker of Mah Meri language, (3) bilingualism, and (4) very keen to participate in the study. Asmah (2009) highlighted that informants who are more than 40 years old are the most suitable in researching syntactic area. This is due to the fact that they have good choice of vocabulary, able to construct grammatical sentences and also matured in handling questions posed to them. Also, Yule (2014) stated that the best way of selecting an informant of a study is by considering the aspects of NORMS (as in *non-mobile, older, rural, male, speakers*). These criterion were taken into consideration when choosing the informant

of this study and the best informant is the head of the village also known as 'Tok Batin'.

### **3.4.2 Research Sample**

The research informant is Encik Sidin bin Bujang, who is also known as the Head Chief or Tok Batin in the Village of Kampung Sungai Bumbun. He fulfilled the basic criteria required for this study. For the record, Tok Batin Sidin is 66 years old and a native speaker of the Mah Meri language which marks him the most suitable candidate for this study. Tok Batin Sidin is listed as the fourth-generation of Mah Meri in Pulau Carey.

He mentioned that the earliest Mah Meri settlement in the Pulau Carey was in 1848. Tok Batin Sidin has 8 children and he is one of 5 families that embraced the Islam religion in the village of Sungai Bumbun. He was appointed as Tok Batin or known as head Villager since 1983 until now. Furthermore, the informant is very keen to participate in the study.

He highlighted that the Mah Meri language should be preserved and he welcomed our project with the hope that his mother tongue will not extinct. He expressed his personal disappointment and regret during the interview that the younger generation of Mah Meri community finds it irrelevant to speak their native language and they are embarrassed if they were known as speakers of Mah Meri language. Reason being, they are already speaking Bahasa Melayu in school, work and everyday life, thus they prefer to be known as Bahasa Melayu speaker. Apart from that, the Tok Batin were

generous in providing common sentences such as everyday utterances containing verbs, nouns and adjective in a complete phrase.

### **3.5 Method of Data Analysis**

The data were drawn from a set of recordings of the sample produced in isolation by the only informant, Tok Batin Sidin. Previous listenings of Mah Meri recordings had allowed for a very detailed data source that determine the subject of interest which are the PRO and Null case. For the purposes of this study, a transcription of the interview is provided to assist the repeated auditory evaluation process. (see Appendix A).

The data will be analysed using the Minimalist Approach by Noam Chomsky by first locating which Mah Meri phrases contains Null Case and PRO. Since the Minimalist Approach is used, the data will be presented by identifying the PRO elements. Also, the data will be displayed using the computational syntactical structure to ensure that the existence of Null Case and PRO is visible.

### **3.6 Research Limitations**

During the initial stage of the proposal, the researcher intended to interview three participants for the purpose of this study. When the researcher approached some of the Mah Meri villages in Kampung Bumbum, unlike Tok Batin Sidin, all of them declined to be involved in this research. This is due to the fact that they are cautious with outsiders and not keen to participate in the interview. The same issue is also

highlighted in the article by Nambiar and Govindasamy (2011) as they face the same scenario as this.

Secondly, the Mah Meri people are also occupied with their everyday chores and their work routine. Thus, most of them are not keen to participate in this study due to time constraint since they are busy with their household duties and jobs. Lastly, there are also difficulties in selecting the most suitable candidate since the researcher needed a subject who is bilingual and proficient in both the Mah Meri and Malay language. Upon selecting the candidates, the researcher needs to enquire beforehand regarding their language proficiency in the 2 respective languages, thus it is difficult to simply enquire about one's language proficiency upon first encounter.

After several approaches and observations, the researcher confirmed Tok Batin Sidin is the most suitable candidate for this study. He suggested only few candidates due to the age limitation and language ability required for this study. On top of that, he mentioned that the older generation may be proficient in the Mah Meri language, but they do not converse well in the Malay language well. The reason why they need to be bilingual as they need to be speaking Bahasa Melayu among themselves and to outsiders. They should also practice their own Mah Meri language since their mother tongue is dying and going to extinct.

In term of the research design, there are limitations in the study especially over the data collection methodology. The methods of data collection is not cost efficient especially in terms of logistics management as the distance of the village is quite far from the research central specifically 51km away. Another limitation involved the

quality of data by interviewer. The quality of data received will often depend on the ability of the interviewer. Some people have the natural ability to conduct an interview and gather data well. In this study the quality of the data may also be jeopardized when there is no clarity to the audio.

The third limitation is foreseen to happen during the transcription process due to the quality of the recording. Incomprehensible auditory utterances may disrupt the data analysis process. Finally another limitation is on the limited sample size. The size of the sample is limited as only one participant may not represent the general population of the Mah Meri people. The limited number of qualified respondents within the subject can be expanded over multiple areas, which again can increase costs.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

In conclusion, Chapter 3 explained in detail about the research methodology that this study has opted to use. The chapter has further elaborated on the chosen research design, the selection of sample, the instrument for the research, the data collection and the data analysis method which the research deemed as appropriate for this study.

The method of interview was also chosen due to the conveniences in collecting the data since the focus of this study is on the Null Case and PRO with regard to the Mah Meri sentence structure. Thus, to understand the structure of the Mah Meri language, it would be convenient to inquire the inner workings of the language via the interview sessions. To add on, details such as the background of the informant's were also asked during interview. Due to convenience factors, other methods like questionnaires

distribution would not be sufficient to collect in-depth data as such. The interview method was also chosen with regards to the job nature of the participant as he has a hectic job to serve as the village's head. Thus it is not be suitable to use questionnaire as a method to avoid any misinterpretations of the questions and there are possibilities to face technical errors to collect data such as everyday utterances.

This research design has benefitted the researchers in terms of accessibility of knowledge and time span. In speaking of the accessibility of knowledge, this study has gained reliable information from a trustworthy native speaker who is the head of the village. Any questions posed by the interviewers, the interviewee were knowledgeable and qualified to assure that the all queries and uncertainties of this study were answered. Unlike other methods, interviews is the most effective way to gain spontaneous and natural utterances with regard to the aims of this study which is to collect data consisting of the speaker's sentence structure. Thus, interviews is regarded as the most suitable way to collect data for this study compared to ethnography approach that requires one to spends long duration at the setting to collect data.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter reports the data analysis and presents findings based on a set of objectives identified earlier. The chapter seeks the answer on whether the Mah Meri language contains the Null Case or whether non-finite phrases exist as well. The next area of discussion involved the level of distribution in terms of **PRO** in Mah Meri and lastly to determine whether **PRO** as a null case checked by the non-finite tense. The analysis is done based on the 329 sentences (see Appendix A) recorded in the sample list. Each sentence was observed to identify the feature matrix within the Non-finite clauses.

#### 4.2 Null Case in Mah Meri

It is commonly assumed that within the discussion of syntactic structure that all constituents in any given structure are *overt*. However, there is also an emphasised argument that within that syntactic structure there may also contain *empty* categories. This term can sometimes mean *covert* or *null*. The null categories are described as having no overt phonetic form, where it is either audible or silent (Radford, 1997). In most languages, these null categories play a central role in the grammar theory. Therefore, this section will identify the existence (or non-existence) of Null Case in Mah Meri language.



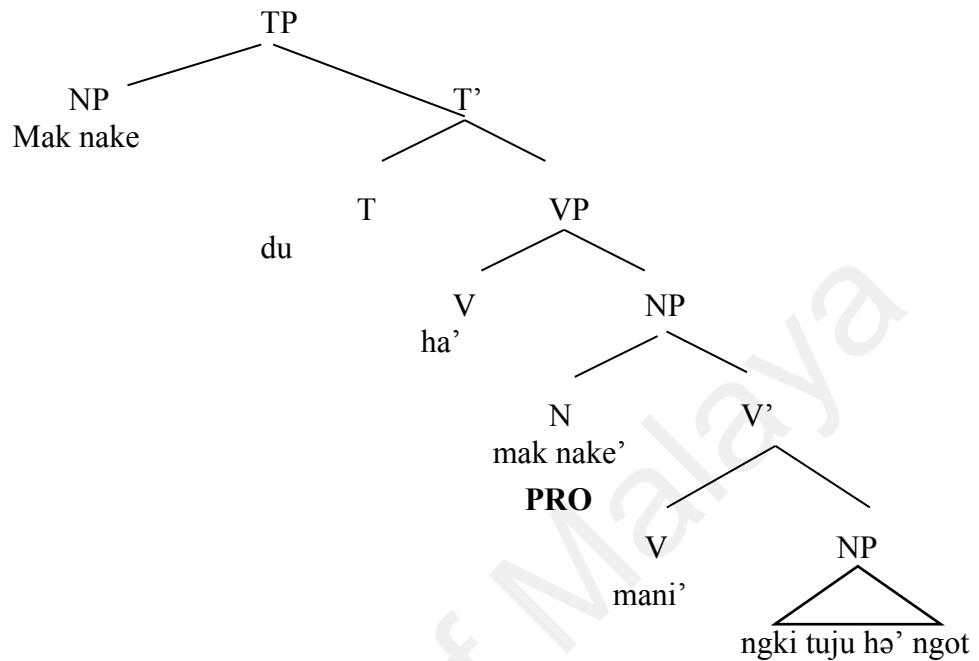
From the analysis, it was found that there are evidences of Null Case in Mah Meri, although it was not well-distributed. In most of the cases, the Null categories appeared within short responses of the speaker. In Example 1, Null Case is explained in a Mah Meri sentence (see Table 4.1) below:

Table 4.1: Example 1 of Null Case in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 9</b>		
<i>Language</i>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Null Case</b>
Mah Meri	ma' nake du [ha' mani' ngki tuju hə' ngot]	ma' nake du [ha' mani' ngki tuju hə' ( <i>PRO</i> ) ngot]
English	That man has runaway (and) [( <i>no one</i> ) knows his where about].	That man has runaway (and) [ <i>PRO</i> knows his where about]

In the example, the bracketed infinitive complement clause in the Mah Meri sentence does not contain an overt subject. Therefore, by contrast, the bracketed complement in both the Mah Meri language and the English translated version of the sentence appeared to be *subjectless*. The PRO can clearly be seen in Sample 9 phrase by the detailed tree structure in (1):

(1)



*Mak nake du ha' mak nake' mani' ngki tuju hæ' ngot*

Figure 4.1: Syntactical Analysis of **PRO** in Sample 9

However, it shall be argued that in Figure 4.1, it is clear that the *subjectless* PRO (*mak nake'*) in the infinitive clauses contain an understood *null subject*. Furthermore, the kind of null subject that was found in the example has the same grammatical and referential properties as pronouns, which later will be discuss as the conventionally designed as **PRO**. Thus, Null case and PRO exist in a Mah Meri phrase.

A sentence as seen in (2), the particular sentence essentially has the same structure, except that the bracketed IP has a covert pronominal determiner **PRO** as its subject in

the sentence. When the sentence is translated using the relevant tree structure (see Figure 4.1), it can be said that the null subject **PRO** in Sample 9 is controlled by the subject *diri e'en* 'myself' of the matrix clause or as equivalently that the missing subject is the antecedent of **PRO** specifically *e'en* 'myself'.

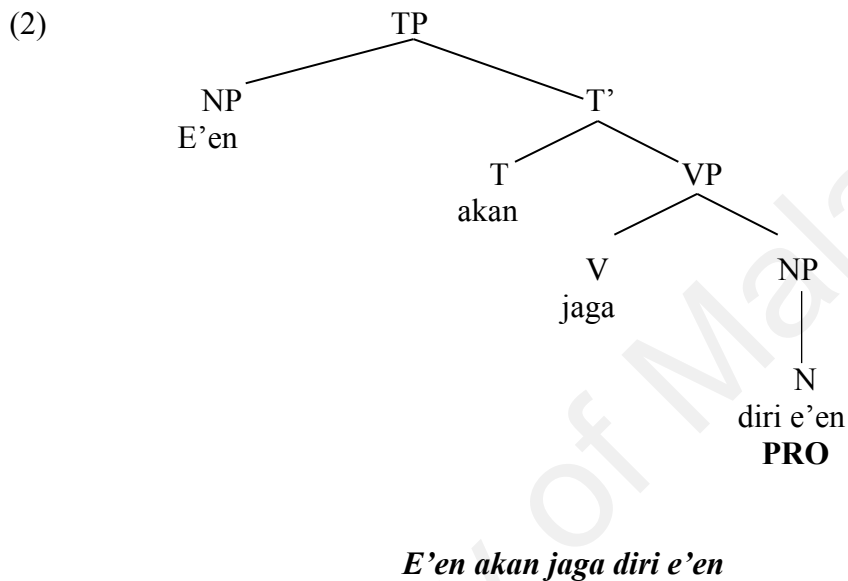


Figure 4.2: Syntax distribution of **PRO** in Mah Meri sentence

The reflexive pronoun *diri e'en* 'myself' can be bounded by **e'en** 'I' which is the PRO in this complete sentence because the sister of the NP node is the T-bar node and also the Pronoun *diri e'en* 'myself' is one of the constituent relevant T-node. Due to this, the NP *e'en* 'I' c-commands the anaphor *diri e'en* 'myself' and the Binding Condition is satisfied. Therefore, the NP *E'en akan jaga diri e'en* 'I will take care of myself' is grammatical with the *e'en* 'I' interpreted as the antecedent of *diri e'en* 'myself' as PRO.

### 4.3 Non-Finite Clauses in Mah Meri

According to Carnie (2011), there is several clauses type, which he categorized them into two groups. The categorization depends on whether these clauses are *tensed* or not. The first group is called *tensed clauses* due to the existence of tenses in the predicates, and it is also commonly known as the *finite clauses*. On the other hand, the clauses without the existence of tensed verb are called as the *tenseless* clauses or the *non-finite* clauses. In this paper, it is found that Mah Meri language is indeed a non-finite clause. It appeared in some of the instructional sentences. Several examples of this non-finite sentence will be provided below.

Table 4.2: Example of Non-finite clauses in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 2</b>	
<b><i>Language</i></b>	<b><i>Example</i></b>
Mah Meri	dutə suwoh hik hepoi hepoi bernapas
English	<i>Doktor asked him to breathe slowly</i>

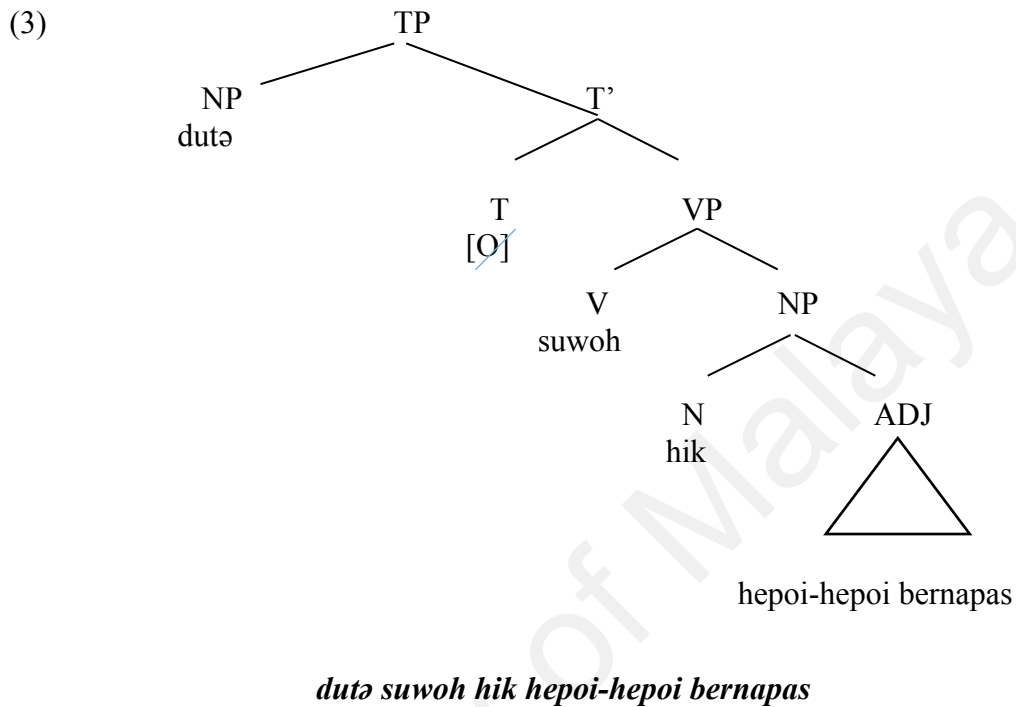


Figure 4.3: Syntax distribution of a non-finite Mah Meri sentence in Sample 2

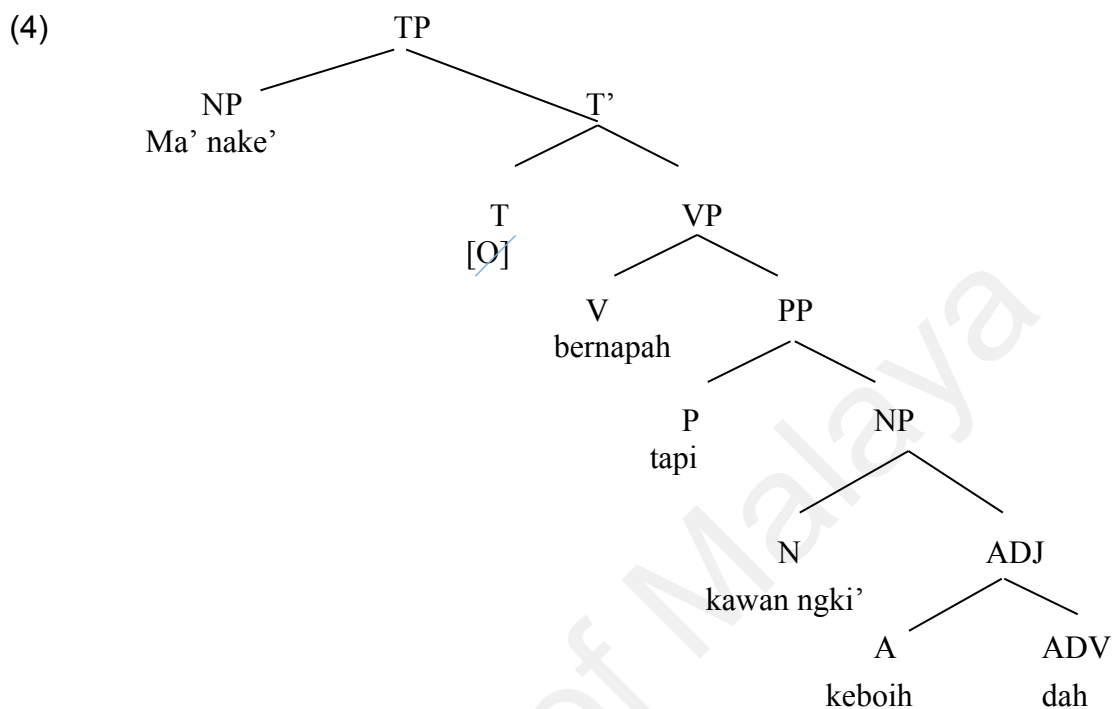
As seen in (3), an example of non-finite Mah Meri phrase is displayed in a syntactic tree form. The full sentence '*dutə suwoh hik hepoi hepoi bernapas*' (*The doctor asked him to breathe slowly*) is regarded as a non-finite Phrase. This can be seen clearly in the above tree syntax (3) that there is the existence of two finite phrase in this sentence which are '*dutə suwoh hik*' and '*hepoi hepoi bernapas*' that can be separated and yet the sentence is still grammatically correct. Thus, non-finite phrase exists in Mah Meri sentence. More examples on non-finite sentences are shown below.

Table 4.3: Example of Non-finite clauses in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 3</b>	
<i>Language</i>	<b>Example</b>
Mah Meri	sama'da ngki' bernapah ataupun keboih
English	<i>Whether he is still breathing or dying</i>

Table 4.4: Example of Non-finite clauses in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 4</b>	
<i>Language</i>	<b>Example</b>
Mah Meri	ma' nake' bernapah tapi kawan ngki' keboih dah
English	<i>That person is still breathing but his friend is dying</i>



*Ma' nake' bernapah tapi kawan ngki' keboih dah*

Figure 4.4: Syntax distribution of a non-finite Mah Meri sentence in Sample 4

As seen in (4), an example of non-finite Mah Meri phrase is displayed in a syntactic tree form. The full sentence '*ma' nake' bernapah tapi kawan ngki' keboih dah*' (*That person is still breathing but his friend is dying*) is regarded as a non-finite Phrase. This can be seen clearly in the above tree syntax (4) that there is the existence of two finite phrase in this sentence which are '*ma' nake' bernapah* and '*kawan ngki' keboih dah*' that can be separated with the PP 'tapi' and yet the sentence is still grammatically correct. Thus, Non-finite phrase exists in Mah Meri sentence.

Table 4.5: Example of Non-finite clauses in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 5</b>	
<i>Language</i>	<b>Example</b>
Mah Meri	ngkit cho' pusing pusing kampung
English	<i>He is walking and looking around the village</i>

Table 4.5 shows more samples of Mah Meri sentences that proved the language to be a non-finite clause. The predicative Mah Meri sentence is often eliminating the needs to have the main or subject clause especially the instructional sentence. More acceptable example of non-finite clauses in Mah Meri phrases are shown as follows:

Table 4.6: Example of Non-finite clauses in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 7</b>	
<i>Language</i>	<b>Example</b>
Mah Meri	gol pinggan pəcah ke wit ləp
English	<i>Take the broken plates and throw it far away</i>



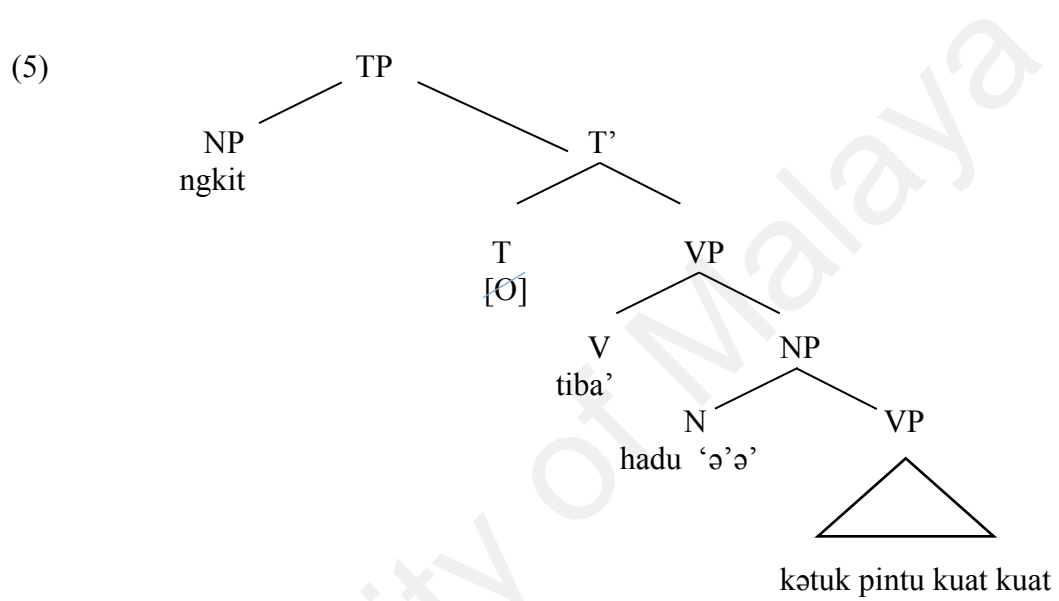
Table 4.7: Example of Non-finite clauses in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 8</b>	
<i>Language</i>	<b>Example</b>
Mah Meri	gunə ngut həl yek      ngkit, ngkit naca bak sha, adik ha naca walə
English	<i>His brother eats first and his sister haven't eaten.</i>

Table 4.8: Example of Non-finite clauses in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 9</b>	
<i>Language</i>	<b>Example</b>
Mah Meri	ngki' tiba' hadu' 'ə'ə' kətuk pintu kuat kuat
English	<i>He came to my house and knocked the door loudly.</i>

Sample 9 above is one of the examples of non-finite Mah Meri phrase and to get a clear picture, the syntactic tree form is displayed in (5). The full sentence 'ngki' tiba' hadu' 'ə'ə' kətuk pintu kuat kuat' (He came to my house and knocked the door loudly) is regarded as a non-finite Phrase. This can be seen clearly in the tree syntax (5) that there is the existence of two finite phrase in this sentence which are ngki' tiba' hadu' 'ə'ə' and kətuk pintu kuat kuat that can be separated and yet the sentence is still grammatically correct. Thus, non-finite phrase exists in Mah Meri sentences.



*ngkit tiba' hadu 'ə'ə' kətuk pintu kuat kuat*

Figure 4.5: Syntactical analysis of **PRO** in Sample 9

#### 4.4 PRO in Mah Meri

PRO is a type of noun and it is a null NP which occupies the [Spec, IP] position of non-finite clauses. These types of PRO NP would have the feature matrix [+a, +p] that shows that they are both anaphoric and pronominal. According to Radford (p85, 2009), there are three types of PRO which are (1) *Discourse Controller*, (2) *Arbitrary Reference*, and (3) *Partially Controlled*. The explanations and examples of all these three types of PRO can be seen below in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Types and examples of PRO nouns (Radford, 2009)

PRO Types	Explanations	Examples
<b>Discourse Controller</b>	When PRO refers to some entity within the domain of discourse but not directly mentioned.	'It's vital [ <i>PRO to prepare myself properly for the exam</i> ]'
<b>Arbitrary Reference</b>	When PRO represents any arbitrary person you care to mention, hence has the same interpretation as arbitrary one in sentence	'It's important [ <i>PRO not to take oneself too seriously</i> ]'
<b>Partially Controlled</b>	When PRO represents a third person plural subject like they and its partially controlled by the main clause subject	'John didn't want [ <i>PRO to get themselves into trouble</i> ]'

Similar to the English language, the Mah Meri language also satisfied each category of the PRO Nouns. Therefore, the samples of Mah Meri sentences that are contains these three types of PRO Nouns are shown in the next sub-sections.

#### 4.4.1 Discourse Controller

There are several sentences in the data collected exhibit the existence of PRO Discourse Controller Noun as one of the categories of PRO Nouns. Discourse Controller, sometimes are known as the *Obligatory Control*, where there are certain infinitival constructions that allow “variable” control. Thus, in this situation, according to Petter (1998), the infinitival subject can be associated with the matrix subject or object; however, it depends on the thematic and pragmatic properties.

Also, there are other situations where a fixed antecedent is required in the respective context (Landau 1999). In the Mah Meri language, it is clear that part of the motivation in exhibiting **PRO** is very semantic in nature. In fact, by referring to Radford (1997), it was discussed that within the traditional grammar, it is appealed that the *subjectless* infinitive clauses display an *understood* or *implicit subject*. In sample sentence (193), for instance, a controlled discourse is which allow an infinitive complement with a PRO subject appeared within the sentence. The PRO Discourse Controller Noun is identified in Table 4.9 which discussed the PRO that exists in Sample 9.

Table 4.10: Example of Discourse Controller PRO in Mah Meri.

<b>Sample 9</b>		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>PRO Discourse Controller Noun</i>
Mah Meri	əntah... moh ka mo ngot ka	əntah [PRO mak nake' moh ka mo ngot ka]
English Translation	Not sure whether [anyone] can do it or not.	Not sure whether [PRO mak nake] can do it or not.

Again, in the sample 9, the *subjectless* infinitive clauses contain an understood Null subject where **PRO** can be seen as referring to an entity but the entity is not clearly mentioned in the sentence. However, this sample has also reflected that **PRO** appears within responses sentence where the speaker state that ‘*They will get married to each othe’r*. Therefore ‘*mak nake*’ (*anyone*) is regarded as **PRO** in this sentence satisfies the function of Discourse Controller Noun as it is still within the domain discourse.

Below are more examples of the **PRO** existence in Discourse Controller in Mah Meri phrase. In order to have a better understanding, the sentence is structured into a tree to clearly see the location of **PRO**.

Table 4.11: Example of Discourse Controller PRO in Mah Meri.

<b>Sample 10</b>		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>PRO Discourse Controller Noun</i>
Mah Meri	elok həl	[PRO mak nake] elok həl
English Translation	(Someone) very good	[PRO someone] is very good

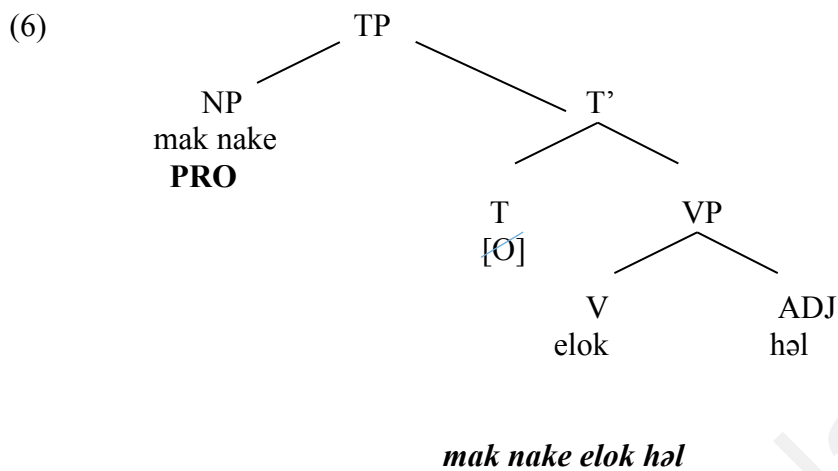


Figure 4.6: Syntactical analysis of **PRO** in Sample 10

Therefore, by contrast, the bracketed complement as seen in Sample 10 in both the Mah Meri language and the English translated version of the sentence appeared to be *subjectless*. The PRO ‘*mak nake*’ can clearly be seen in the Sample 10 phrase by the detailed tree structure in (6) above.

However, it shall be argued that in Figure 4.6, the *subjectless* PRO (*mak nake*) in the infinitive clauses contains *null subject*. Furthermore, the kind of Null subject that was found in the example has the same grammatical and referential properties as Pronouns, which later will be discuss as the conventionally designed as **PRO**. Thus, Null case and PRO exists in Mah Meri phrases.

To further understand the domain on PRO Discourse Controller in Noun, more sample sentences are selected and they are seen in Table 4.12. In order to locate the

PRO in the Mah Meri sentences, another example of PRO Discourse Controller Noun has been identified. Another example of a Mah Meri sentence containing the PRO Discourse Controller Noun is shown in examples below:

Table 4.12: Example of Discourse Controller PRO in Mah Meri

Sample 11		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>PRO Discourse Controller Noun</i>
Mah Meri	ha' mani' haga ka'ai berghubat?	ha' mani' [PRO1] haga ka'ai [PRO2] berghubat?
English Translation	Where do (you) want to bring (someone) for medical treatment?	Where do [PRO1] want to bring [PRO2] [ <i>pro</i> ] medical treatment?

In Sample 11, the existence of Discourse Controller PRO and two Null subjects is identified. Although there are missing PRO, the first of the PROs is unidentified but assumingly is referring to *someone the speaker knows*. The second PRO, or PRO2 however, continued to refer to the first unidentified PRO's subject. In the sentence, it seemed to involve more than two subjects; (1) the speaker, (2) the first PRO subject and (3) the subject of the sentence.

Another example of this form of PRO is found in Sample 12 (Table 4.13). The sentence is describing the situation that the speaker has had encountered. Ideally, the sentence is written in *past tense* indicating that it has already happened. Similar to the other sentences, the existence of PRO and Null subjects in Mah Meri.

Table 4.13: Example of Discourse Controller PRO in Mah Meri

Sample 12		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>PRO Discourse Controller Noun</i>
Mah Meri	cincub nong napah alə tapi lepah nake keboih dah	cincub nong [PRO1] napah alə tapi lepah nake [PRO2] keboih dah
English Translation	This morning (someone) was breathing but afterwards (someone) was dead.	This morning, [PRO1] was breathing but afterwards [PRO2] was dead.

**In Sample 12, it can be seen that once again of the existence of PRO in the language occurs. There is no indication of a specific person but PRO2 is controlled by the missing subject which PRO1.**

#### 4.4.2 Arbitrary Reference

In this section, Arbitrary PRO will be identified and discussed. As discussed by Radford (2009), the Arbitrary Reference is a situation where PRO is used to represent any random person that the speaker cares to mention. In other words, the meaning of this pronoun is understood as ‘*someone*’ because it is not controlled by anything like in the Controlled PRO. It can get its meaning from the contextual clues of the sentence. Therefore, based on the analysis, it is found that the Arbitrary PRO appears in the language.

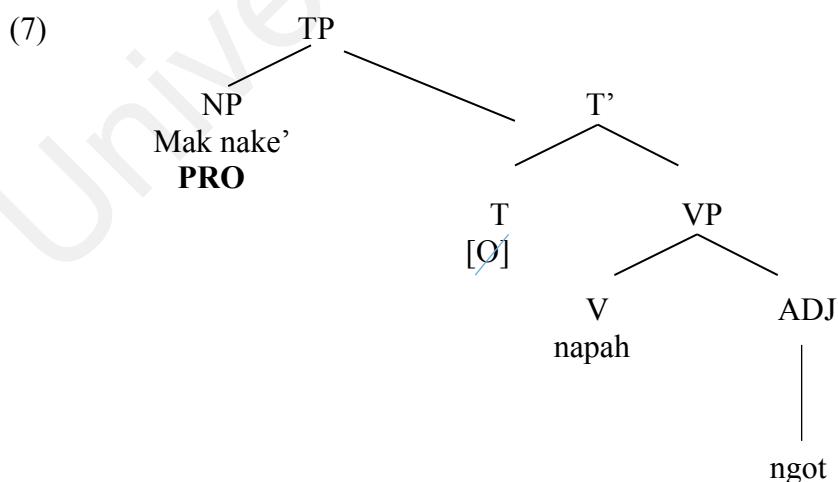


Therefore, examples of Mah Meri sentences will be provided along with the syntactical tree to reflect the presence of Arbitrary Reference in the language.

Table 4.14: Example of PRO Arbitrary Reference Noun in Mah Meri

Sample 13		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>PRO Arbitrary Reference Noun</i>
Mah Meri	napah ngot	[ <b>PRO</b> mak nake] napah ngot]
English Translation	(Someone) breath not!	[ <b>PRO</b> someone] is not breathing!

In the selected sample above (see Table 4.14), the element of PRO Arbitrary Reference Noun specifically ‘*mak nake*’ (*someone*) appears in this very short sentence. Based on the description of this **PRO** type, it does agree with the notion that there is no specific individual is mentioned in the sentence. The sentence simply satisfies the criteria for PRO Arbitrary Reference Noun where PRO represents ‘*mak nake*’ (*someone*) that the speaker deems to mention.



*Mak nake' napah ngot*

Figure 4.7: Syntactical analysis of **PRO** in Sample 13

As seen clearly in Figure 4.7, PRO can be found in a Mah Meri phrase. The PRO here is ‘*mak nake*’ in the Mah Meri sentence which appeared to be Null and it can evidently be seen in the tree structure in (7).

However, it shall be argued that in Figure 4.7, the *subjectless* PRO (*mak nake*) in the infinitive clauses contains an understood *null subject*. Furthermore, the kind of null subject that was found in the example has the same grammatical and referential properties as Pronouns, which later will be discussed as the conventionally designed as **PRO**. Thus, Null case and PRO exist in a Mah Meri phrase.

Another example of PRO Arbitrary Reference type is shown in Table 4.15 below. The Subject ‘*mak nake*’ is evidently missing, but it is assumed that the missing subject is a known entity to the speaker. In sample 14, the instructional sentence also described the missing subject and existing PRO. It is assumed that the speaker is instructing *someone* to help him scratching his back and that someone is a person that is known to the speaker. This sentence is pronominal and a *subjectless infinite* clause. Figure 4.8 will syntactically analyse the sentence.

Table 4.15: Example of PRO Arbitrary Reference noun in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 14</b>		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Arbitrary Reference PRO</i>
Mah Meri	Kaka' kəghek e'e'	[ <b>PRO</b> mak nake] kaka' kəghek e'e'
English Translation	Scratch body I.	[ <b>PRO</b> someone] Scratch my body.

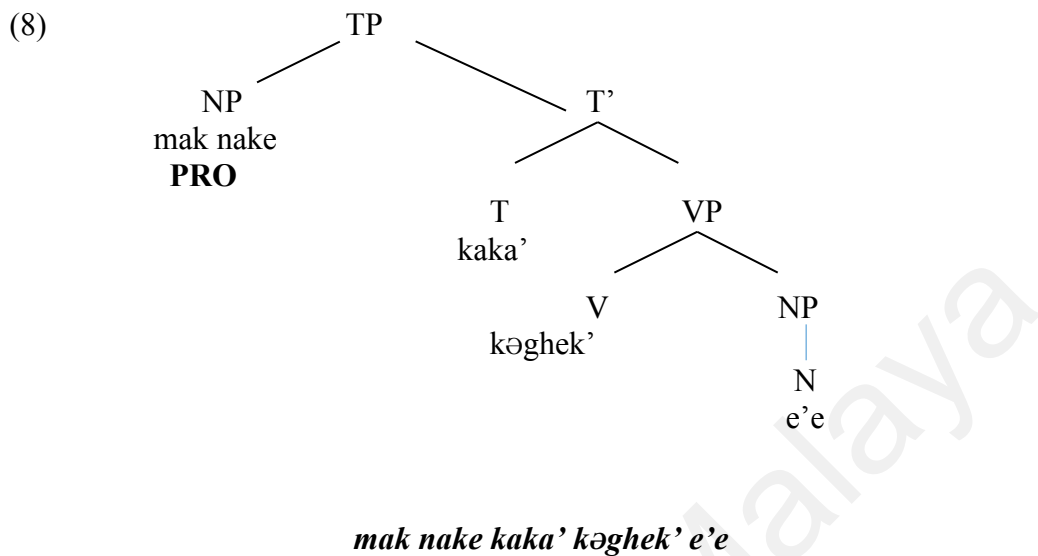


Figure 4.8: Syntactical analysis of **PRO** in Sample 14

The above syntactic structure in (8) is an example of a Mah Meri Mah sentence appeared to have the Null existence. The PRO can clearly be seen as categorized under the NP branch specifically ‘*mak nake*’ (*someone*). Since the lexical ‘*mak nake*’ is regarded as Null, the Mah Meri sentence ‘*Kaka' kəghek e'e*’, contains an understood *null subject*. Furthermore, the kind of null subject that was found in the example has the same grammatical and referential properties as pronouns. Some other samples of Mah Meri phrases to demonstrate the existence of PRO in Arbitrary Reference can be seen as follows:

Table 4.16: Example of PRO Arbitrary Reference in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 15</b>		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Arbitrary Reference PRO</i>
Mah Meri	haga naca nasi ət?	[ <b>PRO</b> hik] haga naca nasi ət?
English Translation	Want my rice.	[ <b>PRO</b> you] want my rice.

In sample sentence 15 above, the Arbitrary Reference is identified by the missing pronoun subject '*hik*' (*you*). It can also be found in a question form and this sentence is a (almost) complete sentence where the speaker is indicating to *someone* is his speech. And in this sentence, the subject is missing or is not been directly mentioned. Although it was not explicitly discussed, the missing subject refers to an entity within that domain of discourse as per explained by Radford (2008).

To understand the existence of Null and PRO in Sample 15, Figure 4.9 below shows the syntactical analysis of the sentence.

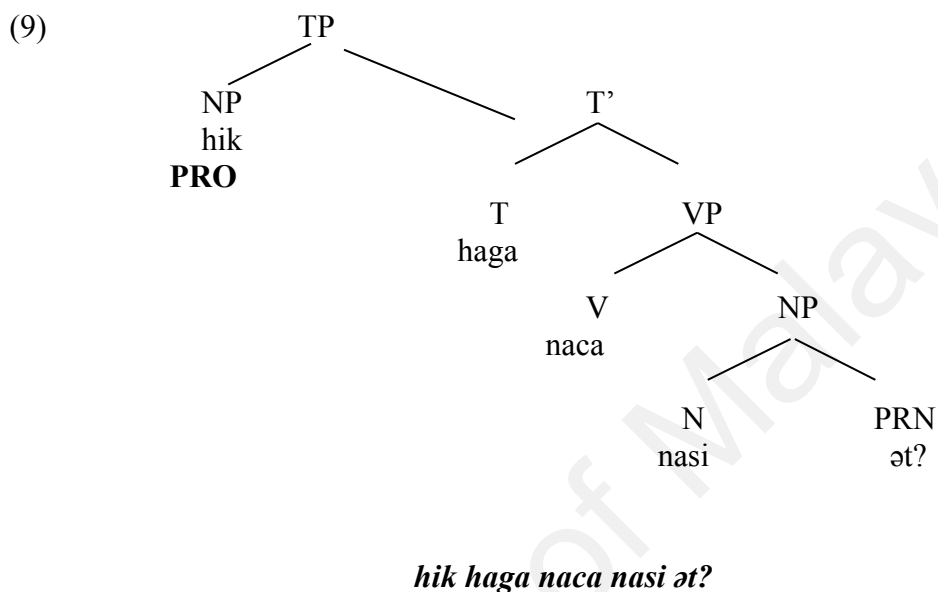


Figure 4.9: Syntactical analysis of **PRO** in Sample 15

The Subject '*hik*' (*you*) is evidently missing in (9), but it is assumed that the missing subject is a known entity to the speaker. In Sample 15, the instructional sentence also described the missing subject and existing PRO. This particular Mah Meri sentence is pronominal and a *subjectless infinite* clause. Thus, Mah Meri sentences is proven to contain Null and PRO in their daily sentences.

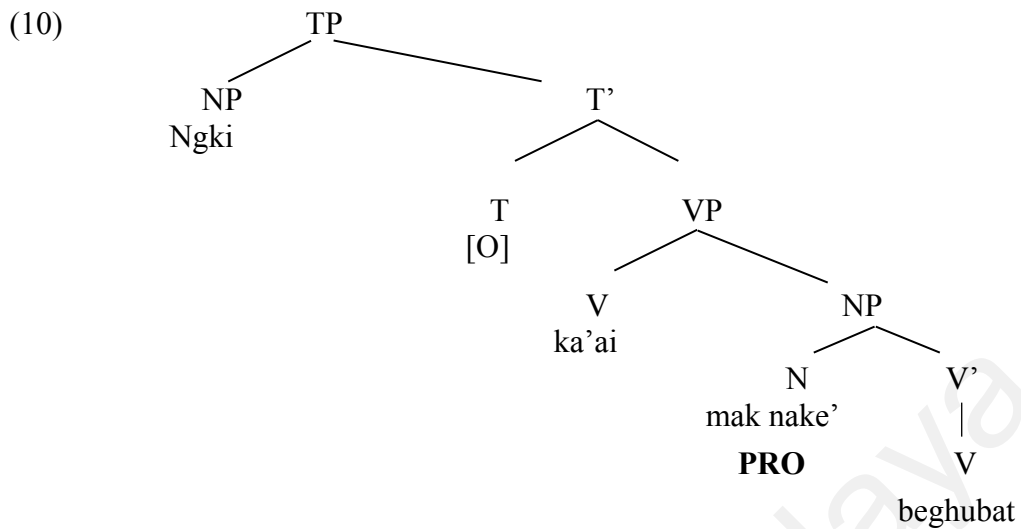
#### 4.4.3 Partially Controlled PRO

Radford (2009) has also discussed on the existence of Partially Controlled PRO, or also known as *Optional Control PRO* where the **PRO** represents a *third* person plural subject like *they*, *him* or *her* and its partially controlled by the main clause subject. Therefore, examples of Mah Meri sentences will be provided to reflect the presence of Partially Controlled in the language.

Table 4.17: Example of the Partially Controlled PRO in Mah Meri

Sample 16		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Partially Controlled PRO</i>
Mah Meri	ngki' ka'ai beghubat	ngki' ka'ai [ <b>PRO</b> mak nake'] beghubat
English Translation	he brings (someone) for medical treatment	he brings [ <b>PRO</b> mak nake] someone for medical treatment

In Sample 16 (see Table 4.17) above, the element of Partially Controlled **PRO** is identified when the missing word that is the **PRO** is partially controlled by the main clause subject in the sentence. It can be determined that **PRO** is referring to a *third* person specifically '*mak nake*' (*someone*) which could be either a *he* or a *she* that is not clearly indicated. Thus the full sentence of '*ngki' ka'ai beghubat*' is proven to contain **PRO** making the sentence grammatical. Figure 4.10 has clearly analysed the syntactical evidence of the sample.



*Ngki ka'ai mak nake' beghubat*

Figure 4.10: Syntactical analysis of **PRO** in Sample 16

From Figure 4.10, it can be identified that PRO 'mak nake' (*someone*) existed in the *Noun Phrase* of the sentence making it comprehensible. Furthermore, the kind of Null subject that was found in the example that has the same grammatical and referential properties as pronouns. Thus, it is proven that Null case and PRO exist in a Mah Meri phrase. Some other examples of Partially Controlled PRO in Mah Meri are seen in Table 4.18 and 4.19.

Table 4.18: Example of the Partially Controlled PRO in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 17</b>		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Partially Controlled PRO</i>
Mah Meri	kenon nga kencu' ngahek haga main bola	kenon nga kencu' ngahek [ <b>PRO</b> awak] haga main bola
English Translation	the child and grandchild are arguing want to play football	the child and the grandchild are arguing because [ <b>PRO</b> they] want to play football

In the selected Sample 17 above (Table 4.18), the element of PRO as Partially Controlled can be seen as in the bracketed PRO 'awak' (*they*). Based on the description of this **PRO** type, it does agree with the notion that there is an entity mentioned indirectly in the sentence making it comprehensible. The sentence simply satisfies the criteria for Partially Controlled PRO where the Null represents 'awak' (*they*) that the speaker deems to mention.

Table 4.19: Example of the Partially Controlled PRO in Mah Meri

<b>Sample 18</b>		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Partially Controlled PRO</i>
Mah Meri	karak jawatan hak syarikat nake	[ <b>PRO</b> Nom mah] karak jawatan hak syarikat nake
English Translation	Resigned position from company that	[ <b>PRO</b> many people] resigned from that company



Again, in the sample 18, another example is given to explain the the *subjectless* infinitive clauses containing an understood Null subject where **PRO** is deemed as Partially Controlled. As seen in the complete sentence, '*karak jawatan hak syarikat nake*' the subject is missing but can be replaced with a **PRO** '*Nom mah*' (*They*). This particular lexical can be seen as referring to an entity but the entity is not clearly mentioned in the sentence. However, since the lexical '*nom mah (They)*' is regarded as **PRO** and this sentence satisfies the function of Partially Controlled.

To understand the sample better, Figure 4.11 below shows the syntactical analysis of the sentence.

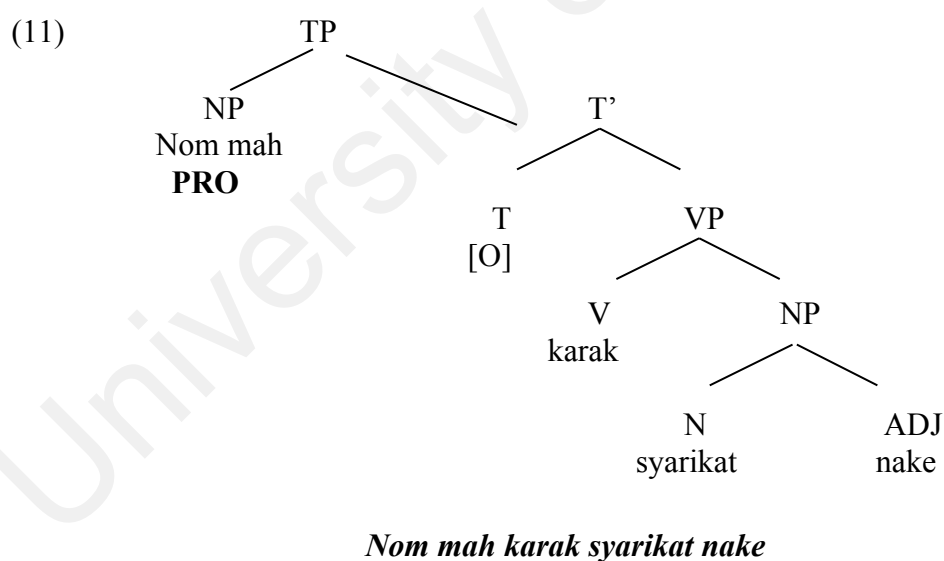


Figure 4.11: Syntactical analysis of **PRO** in Sample 18

As seen clearly in Figure 4.11, PRO can be found in a Mah Meri phrase. The PRO here is the lexical '*Nom mah*' in the Mah Meri sentence which appears to be a Null and it can evidently be seen in the tree structure in Figure 4.11. Furthermore, the kind of null subject that was found in the example has the same grammatical and referential properties as pronouns and designed as **PRO**. Thus, Null case and PRO exist in a Mah Meri phrase.

#### 4.5 PRO distribution in Mah Meri language

Based on a study conducted by Huang (1989), PRO drop is influenced by their distribution across languages, referential properties and how their distribution and reference be properly accounted for within an optimal theory of grammar. In this case, the distribution of PRO across the Mah Meri language can be seen as well as distributed with a clearly determined referential properties. In reference to the PRO types, the examples identified have proved that the three elements of PRO had been equally analysed.

Similar to the English language, the Mah Meri language also satisfied each category of the PRO Nouns. Samples of Mah Meri sentence containing PRO nouns for each category can be seen from Sample 19 to Sample 21.

Table 4.20: Example of PRO in a Mah Meri phrase

<b>Sample 19</b>		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Arbitrary Reference PRO</i>
Mah Meri	Elok penting be kedja nohok henkik sendiri	Elok penting [ <b>PRO</b> be kedja nohok <b>henkik sendiri</b> ]
English Translation	<i>Good important do work now myself.</i>	It is important [ <b>PRO</b> to work it out <b>myself now</b> ].

Table 4.21: Example of PRO in a Mah Meri phrase

<b>Sample 20</b>		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Discourse Controller PRO</i>
Mah Meri	Elok penting belajar ngatur masa muey-muey sendiri	Elok penting [ <b>PRO</b> belajar ngatur masa <b>muey-muey sendiri</b> ]
English Translation	<i>Good important study organize time oneself.</i>	It is important for <b>oneself</b> to learn [ <b>PRO</b> to manage time]

Table 4.22: Example of PRO in a Mah Meri phrase

<b>Sample 21</b>		
<i>Language</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Partially Controlled PRO</i>
Mah Meri	<b>Henkik</b> hagak ngut lep <b>humak</b> hak tukah	<b>Henkik</b> hagak ngut [ <b>PRO</b> lep <b>humak</b> hak tukah]
English Translation	<i>They do not want enter themselves in car</i>	‘ <b>They</b> refuse [ <b>PRO</b> get <b>themselves</b> into the car]’

As seen in the Mah Meri sentences (Sample 19 to 21), PRO exists in any form of sentence structure. For instance, (a) Sample 19 is the type of PRO as Discourse Controller, (b) Sample 20 is the type of **PRO** as Arbitrary Discourse and (c) the type of PRO as Partially Controlled. PRO can also be categorized and placed into a syntactic tree as shown below in (12):

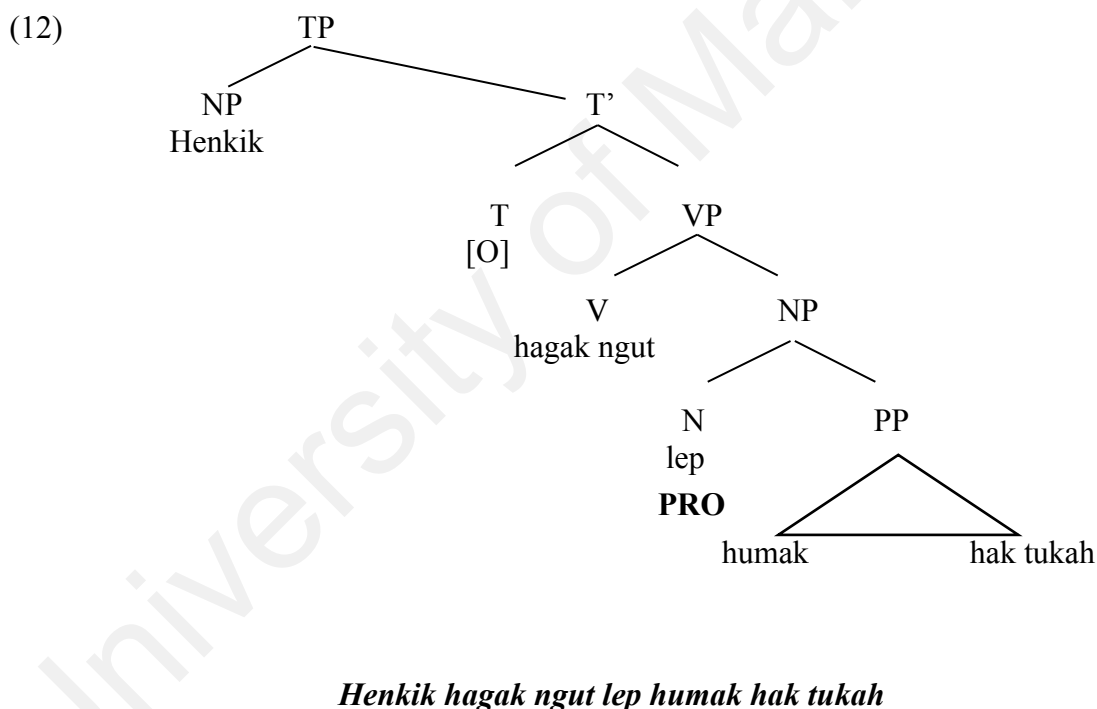


Figure 4.12: Syntactical analysis of **PRO** in Sample 21

The PRO can clearly be seen in the detailed tree structure in (12) above. Clearly the *subjectless* PRO under the NP branch can be replaced with the lexical 'lep' (they) in the infinitive clauses. Thus, this Mah Meri sentence contain an understood *null subject*. Furthermore, the kind of Null subject that was found in the example has the

same grammatical and referential properties as Pronouns, which later will be discuss as the conventionally designed as **PRO**. Thus, Null case and PRO exist in a Mah Meri phrase.

#### 4.5.1 The Computational syntactic process

The categorical selection of the Mah Meri computation can be done in several steps starting with **Numeration**, followed by **Selection** and **Merging** to be ended with **Movements** within the tree branch. By looking at these examples we are able to identify the existence of Null and PRO in Mah Meri phrases. Consider the following Mah Meri sentential:

- (13) **Penyanyi nake nyampaikan lagu hak gelap nake**  
Singer that deliver song at night that  
*‘That singer delivered a song last night’*

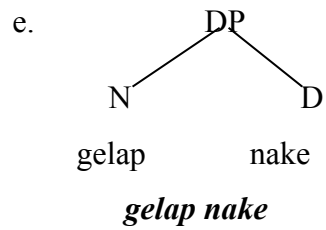
Consider the above Mah Meri sentence, (13), this particular Mah Meri phrase will be presented in a computational aspect of the syntactic structure which is done using steps such as numeration, selection, merging and movements steps.

- (13) a. Numeration = { **penyanyi, nake, nyampai, lagu, nake, gelap, nake, v** }

- b. Select *gelap*

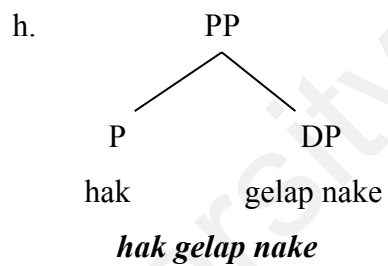
c. Select *nake*

d. Merge (*gelap, nake*)



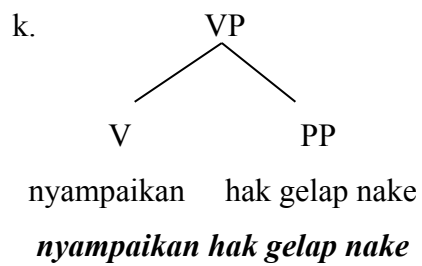
f. Select *hak*

g. Merge (*hak, QP*)

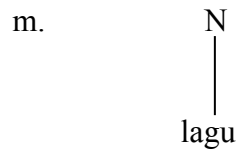


i. Select *nyampaikan*

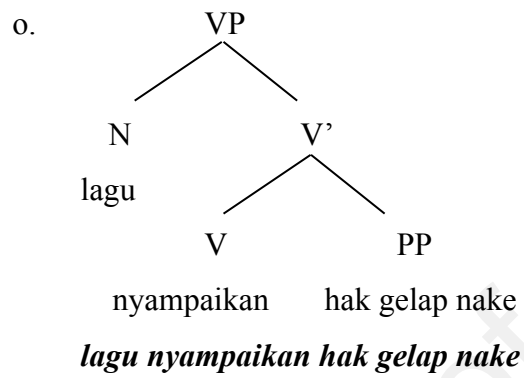
j. Merge (*nyampaikan, PP*)



l. Select *lagu*

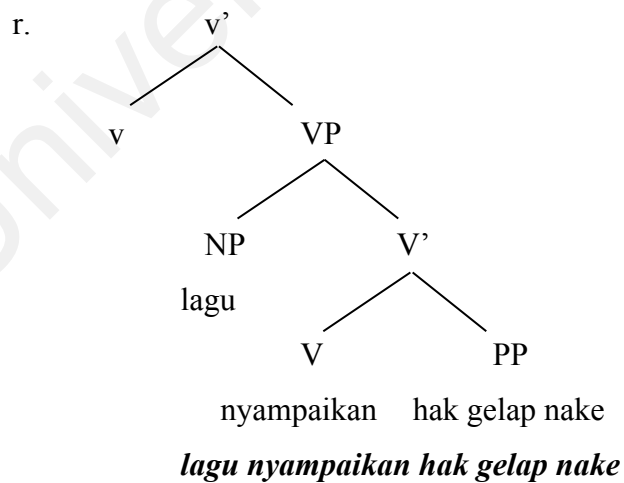


n. Merge (N, VP)



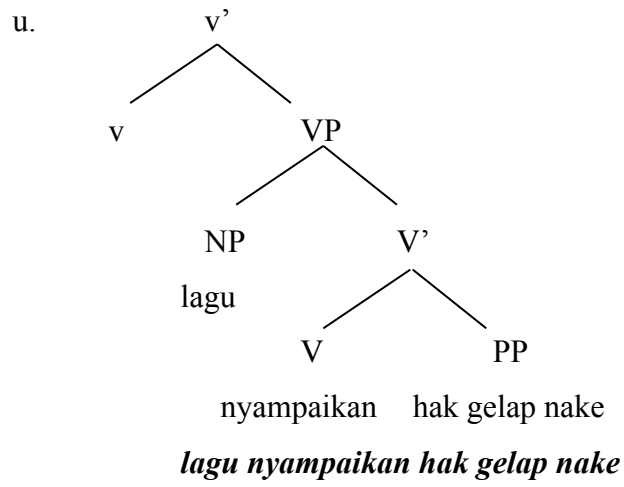
p. Select v

q. Merge (v, VP)



s. Select v

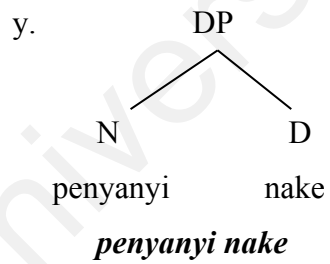
t. Merge (v, VP)



v. Select *penyanyi*

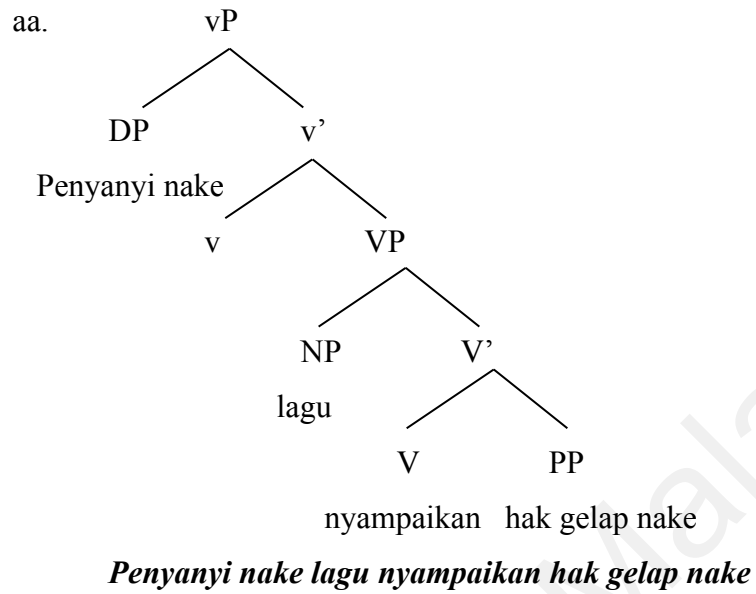
w. Select *nake*

x. Merge (penyanyi, nake)

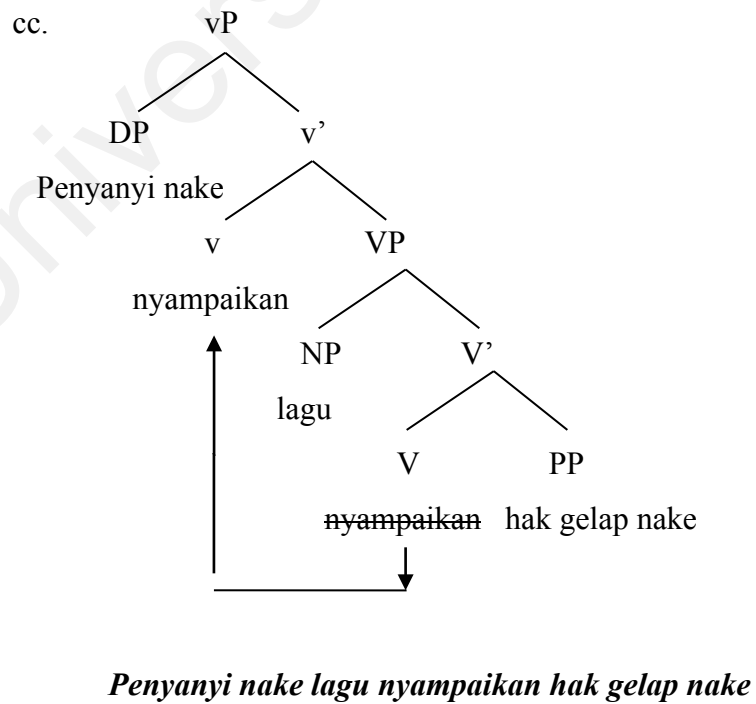


z. Merge (DP, v')

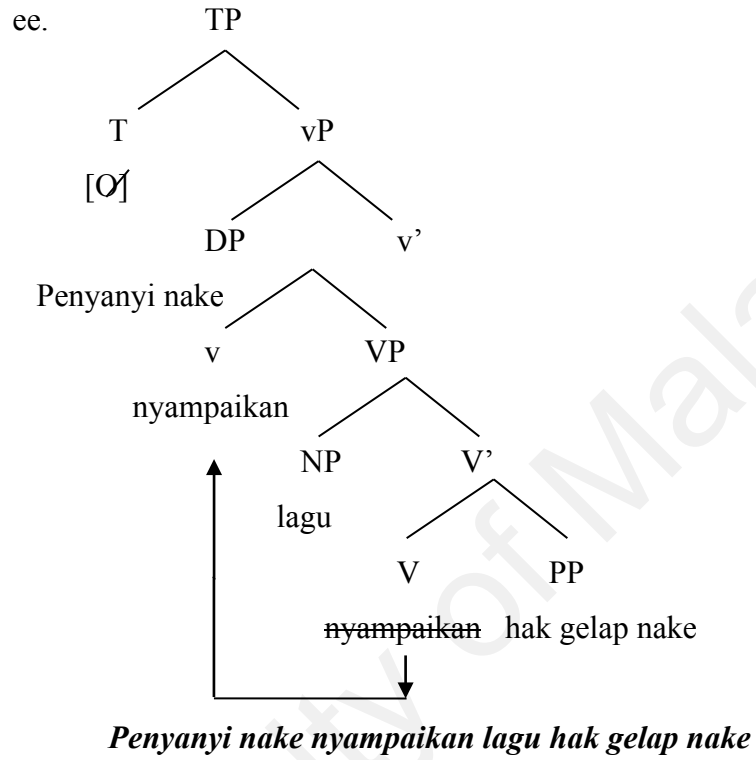




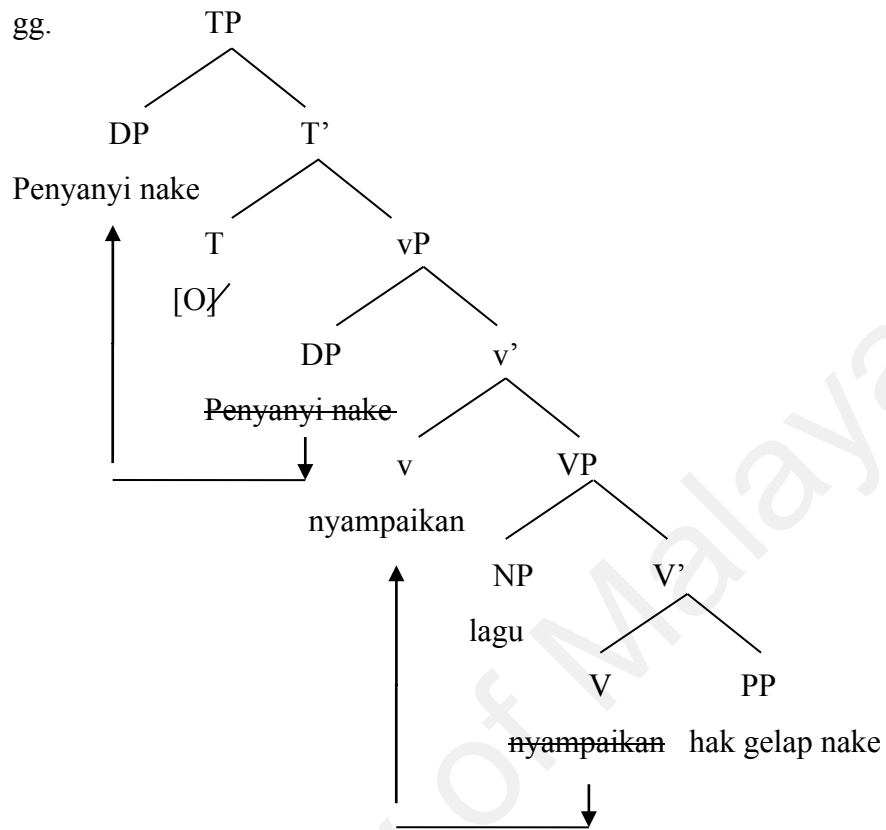
bb. Move nyampaikan



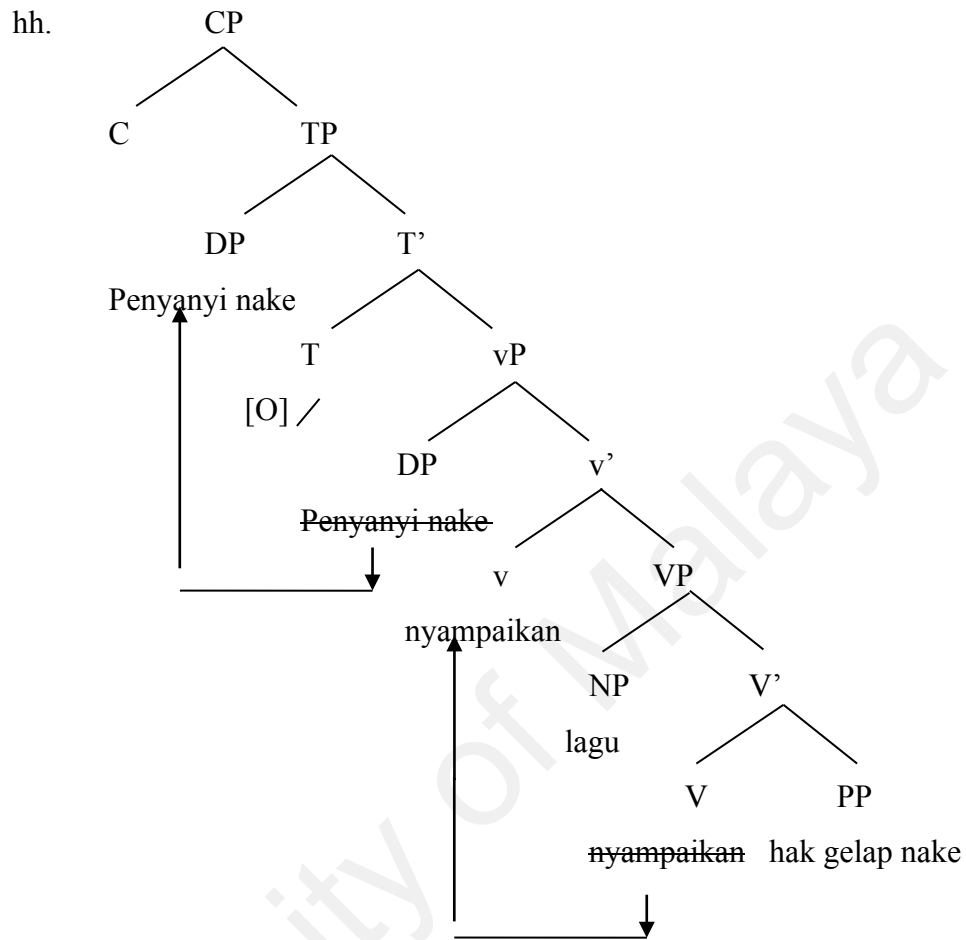
dd. Merge (T, vP)



ff. Move DP Penyanyi nake



*Penyanyi nake lagu nyampaikan hak gelap nake*



*Penyanyi nake nyampaikan lagu hak gelap nake*

Figure 4.13 The derivation of the Mah meri computational syntactic process

The above derivation in Figure 4.13 shows the computation of the sentence in (13) that has the following Numeration elements { **penyanyi, nake, nyampai, lagu, nake, gelap, nake, v** }. The elements correspond to a nominal, a determiner **nake** ‘*that*’ which are used twice in the computation. The computation starts with the selection of the nominal **gelap** ‘*night*’ and the determiner **nake** ‘*that*’ and merged these two lexical items together forming a syntactic object **DP gelap nake** ‘*that night*’ as in

(13e). This string of DP is the first syntactic object produced by the operation Merge. This merger is followed by the selection of the preposition **hak** ‘*on*’ as shown in (13h) forming the second syntactic object [PP [P **hak**] [DP [N **gelap**] [D **nake**]]].

In the process of building up the VP, this is done by selecting the verb **nyampaikan** ‘*delivering*’ as seen in (13h) and this selection is followed by merging this particular verb **nyampaikan** ‘*delivering*’ with the syntactic object [PP [P **hak**] [DP [N **gelap**] [D **nake**]]] to form the third syntactic object [VP [ V **nyampaikan**] [PP [P **hak**] [N **gelap**] [D **nake**]]]. The VP is formed with the verb having the sister—precedence syntactic relation to the PP. The label VP means that the lexical verb *nyampaikan* ‘*delivering*’ is the head of the phrasal category which immediately dominates the said verb and the **PP hak gelap nake** ‘*on that night*’. This is the situation whereby c-selects a PP and s-selects as a goal argument.

The computation continues by selecting the Noun **lagu** ‘*song*’ which has its [uCase]. In building up the VP, the syntactic object [NP [N **lagu**]] is merged with the partially established VP as indicated in (13o) where this VP immediately dominates the **NP lagu** ‘*song*’ and the **PP hak gelap nake** ‘*on that night*’. The lexical verb *nyampaikan* ‘*delivering*’ of this VP structure assigns the theme theta role to the NP **lagu** ‘*song*’ which occupies the [Spec, VP]. The computation moves on by forming the v’ as shown in (13u) and the vP is occupied by merging both Noun *penyanyi* ‘*singer*’ and Determiner *nake* ‘*that*’ forming a complete DP as in (13aa). To have the argument in [Spec, vP] theta-marked, the verb **nyampaikan** ‘*delivering*’ must undergo movement

to be adjoined to the null causative light verb as shown in (13cc) leaving its trace marked by a strikethrough in the original position of the lexical verb that is [V, VP].

Under the vP branch, considering the fact that the whole clause needed a subject to complete it, the N **penyanyi** ‘*singer*’ is merged with determiner **nake** ‘*that*’ together with the PP **hak gelap nake** ‘*on that night*’ is merged with the null T to form the higher T’. Since the subject needed to be located before the third syntactic object [VP [ V nyampaikan] [PP [P hak] [N gelap] [D nake]]], the DP **penyanyi** ‘*singer*’ is moved to the syntactic object in TP as in (13gg). In the CP structure in (13hh), the syntactic object TP in (13gg) is merged with the null C which has the declarative force and thus this is the end of the entire computation process.

Some other samples of Mah Meri phrases to demonstrate the categorical selection to create the computational structure can be seen in (14):

(14) **Nom mah karak jawatan hak syarikat nake**

Many people resigned position from company that

*‘Many people resigned from that company’*

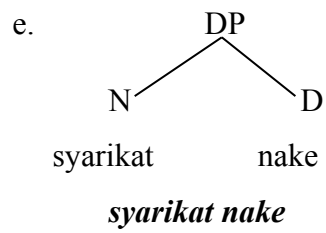
The above Mah Meri sentence in (14) would go through the same steps in computational process such as numeration, selection, merging and movements. These processes can be seen step by step below:

(14) a. Numeration = { **Nom, mah, karak, jawatan, hak, syarikat, nake, v** }

b. Select *syarikat*

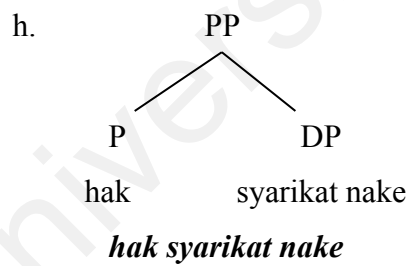
c. Select *nake*

d. Merge (*syarikat, nake*)



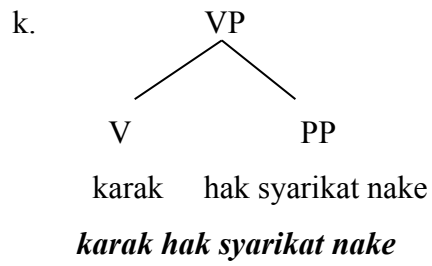
f. Select *hak*

g. Merge (*hak, QP*)

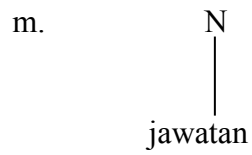


i. Select *karak*

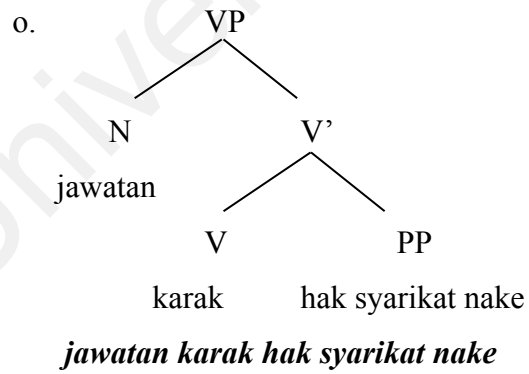
j. Merge (*karak, PP*)



l. Select *jawatan*



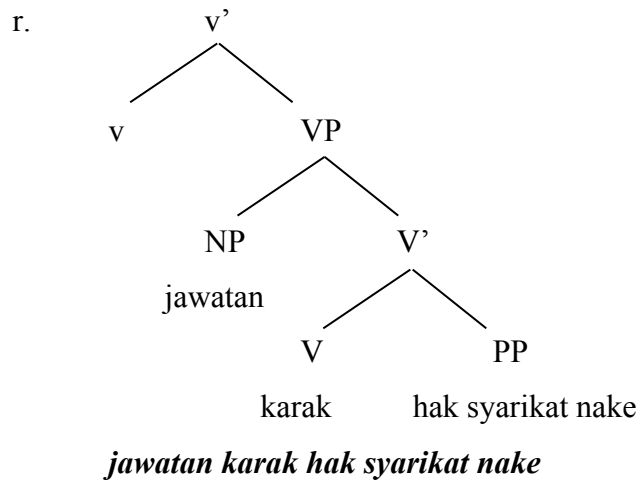
n. Merge (N, VP)



p. Select *v*

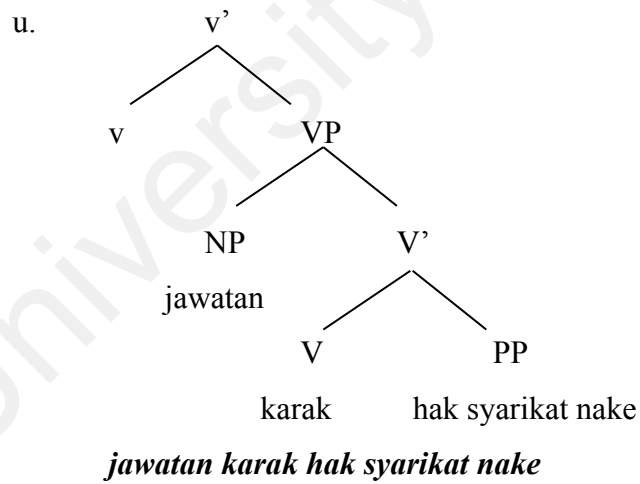
q. Merge (*v*, VP)





s. Select  $v$

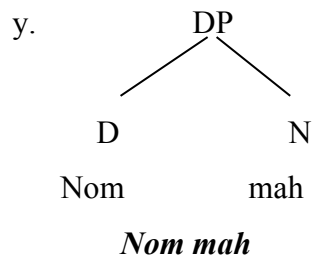
t. Merge ( $v$ , VP)



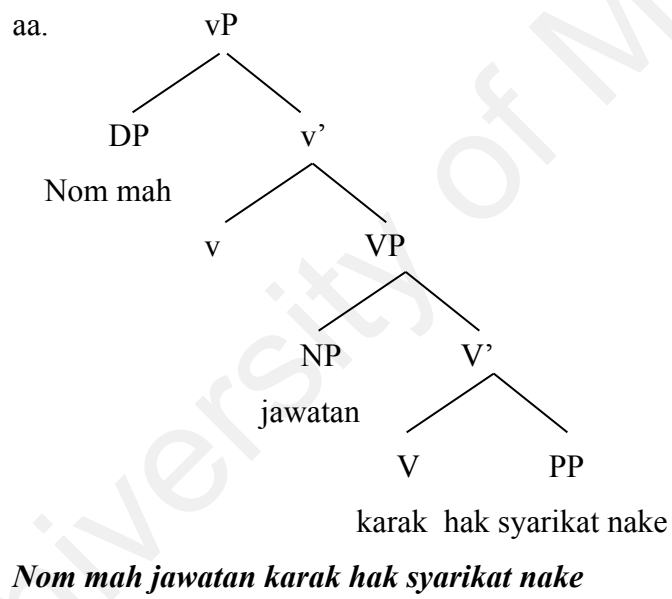
v. Select ***nom***

w. Select ***mah***

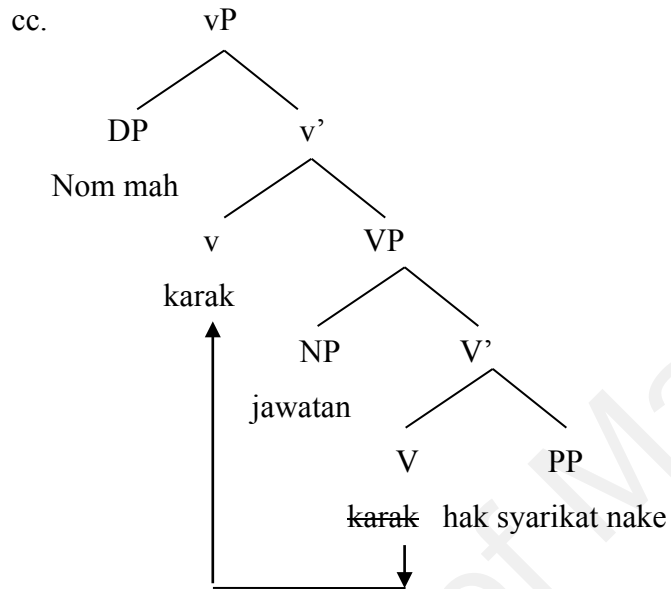
x. Merge (mah, nom)



z. Merge (DP, v')

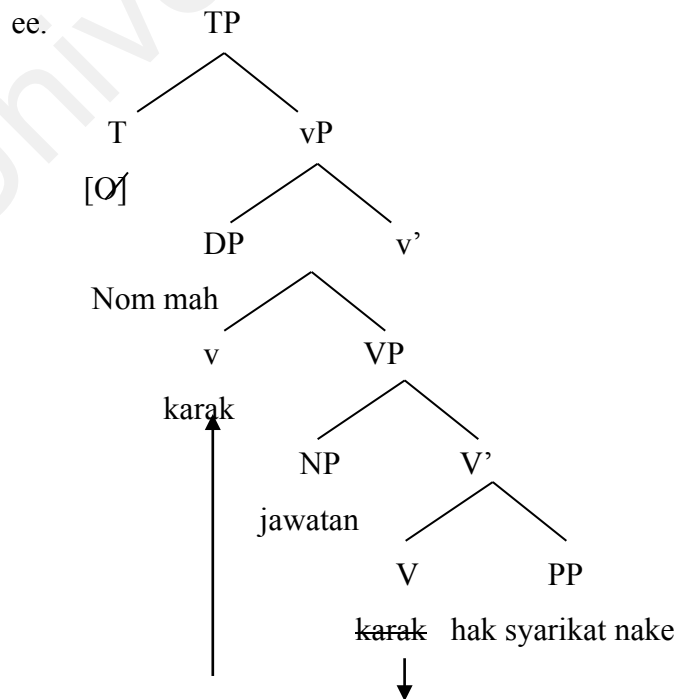


bb. Move ***karak***



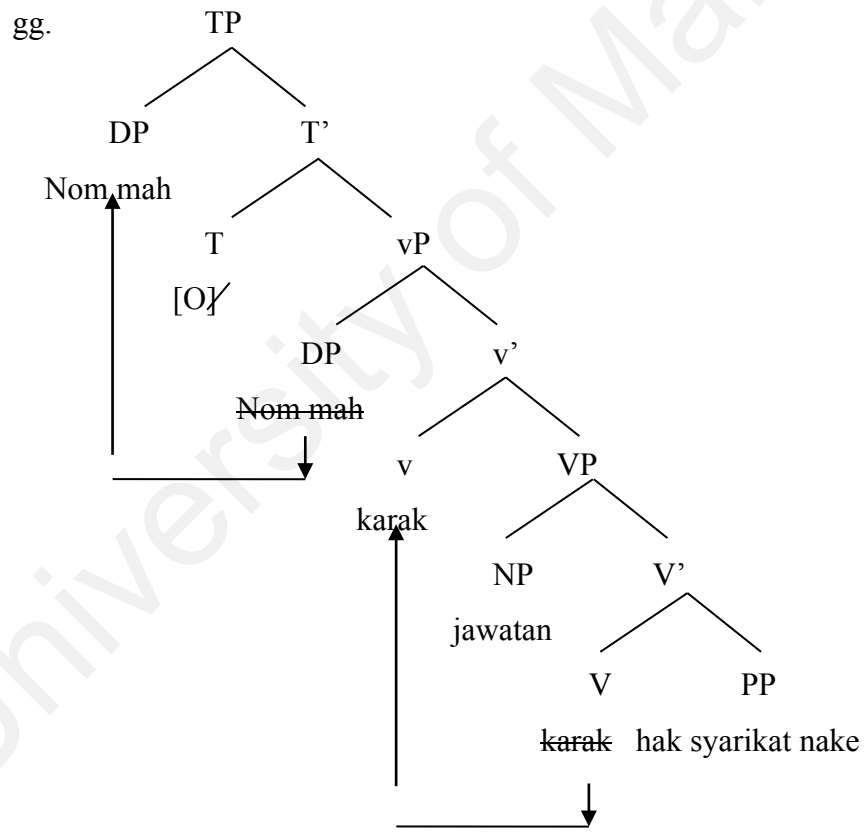
*Nom mah karak jawatan hak syarikat nake*

dd. Merge (T, vP)



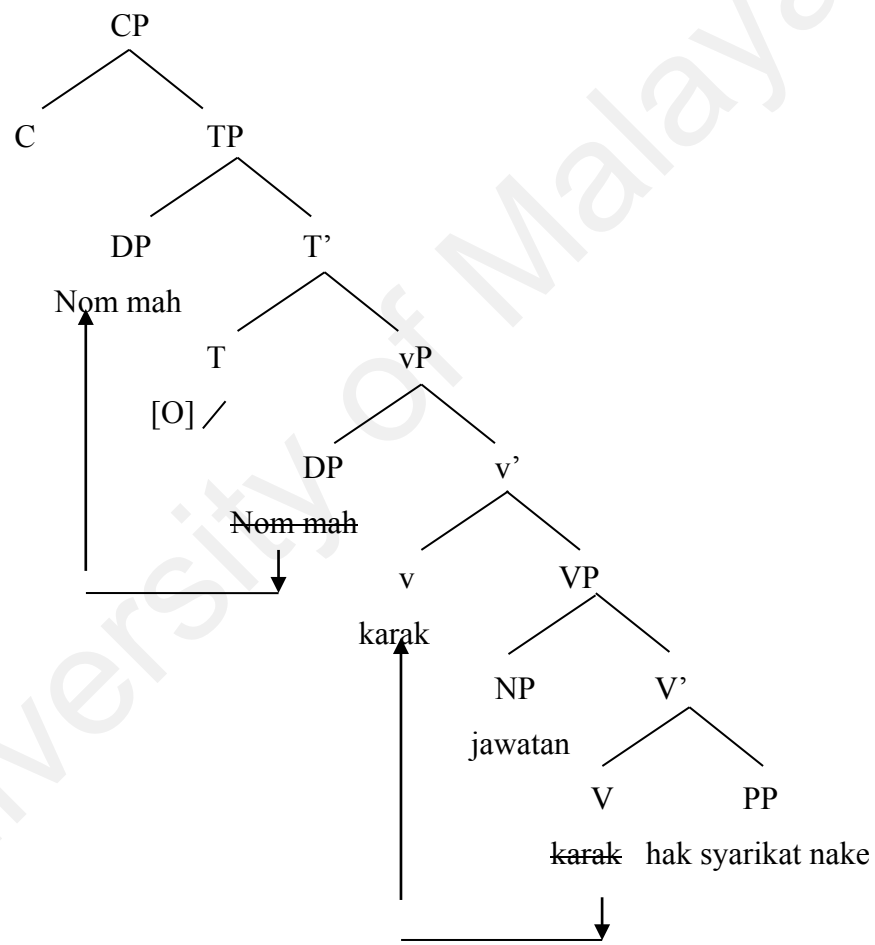
*Nom mah karak jawatan hak syarikat nake*

ff. Move DP Nom mah



*Nom mah karak jawatan hak syarikat nake*

hh.



*Nom mah karak jawatan hak syarikat nake*

Figure 4.14 The derivation of the Mah meri computational syntactic process

The derivation in Figure 4.14 shows the step by step computational processes by using the numeration, selection, merging and some movements within the tree branch to form a complete CP. The process started with drawing out the numeration elements { **nom, mah, karak, jawatan, hak, syarikat, nake, v** }. The computation starts with selection of the nominal **syarikat** ‘*company*’ and merging this with the determiner **nake** ‘*that*’ forming a syntactic object **DP syarikat nake** ‘*that company*’ as in (14e). Next, the selection of the preposition **hak** ‘*on*’ is merged with the previously built DP as shown in (14h) forming the second syntactic object **[PP [P hak] [DP [N syarikat] [D nake]]]**.

The next process is to build up the VP and this is done by selecting the verb **karak** ‘*resigned*’ as seen in (14h) and this selection then merged with the syntactic object **[PP [P hak] [DP [N syarikat] [D nake]]]** forming the third syntactic object **[VP [ V karak] [PP [P hak] [N syarikat] [D nake]]]**. The VP is then formed with the sister—precedence verb, the PP. The VP occupied with the verb **karak** ‘*resigned*’ is the head of the phrasal category which immediately dominates the particular verb and the **PP hak syarikat nake** ‘*from that company*’.

The computation carries on by selecting the Noun **jawatan** ‘*position*’ which has its [uCase]. In building up the VP, the syntactic object **[NP [N jawatan]** is merged with the partially established VP as indicated in (14o). Particularly, this VP immediately dominates the **NP jawatan** ‘*position*’ and the **PP hak syarikat nake** ‘*from that company*’. Meanwhile the the theme theta role to the **NP jawatan** ‘*position*’ which occupies the [Spec, VP] by the verb **karak** ‘*resigned*’ of this VP structure assigns.

The computation continues by forming the v' as shown in (14u). The vP is occupied by merging the Determiner **nom** '*many*' and noun **mah** '*people*' forming a complete DP as in (14aa). To have the argument in [Spec, vP] theta-marked, the verb **karak** '*resigned*' must experience movement to be attached to the Null causative light verb as shown in (14cc). Due to this process, a trace marked is left by a strikethrough in the original position of the lexical verb that is [V, VP].

Moving on to form a complete vP branch, the whole clause needed a subject to complete it. Thus, the **Determiner** **nake** '*that*' is merged with **Noun** **moh** '*people*' together with the **PP** **hak syarikat nake** '*from that company*'. This string is then merged with the null T to form the higher T'. Since the subject needed to be located before the third syntactic object [VP [ V **karak**] [PP [P **hak**] [N **syarikat**] [D **nake**]]], the **DP** **penyanyi** '*singer*' is moved to the syntactic object in TP as in (14gg). The final stage would be to form the CP structure in (14hh). This is done by merging the syntactic object TP in (14gg) with the null C which has the declarative force and thus this is the end of the entire computation process.

The tripartite structure of clauses can be represented by drawing the Finite Phrase for INFL-less sentential structure. This process can be employed due to the fact that some Mah Meri sentences do not project an INFL category. Focusing on the tripartite structure of the clause, consider the representation of cartography in (15a) and (15b):

(15) a. **Batin jet ucapan**

Tok Batin delivers speech

*'Tok Batan is delivering a speech'*

**b. jet: V : <agent, theme>**

The sentence in (15a) has the verb *jet* **'delivering'** which is derived from the root *jet* **'to deliver'** and being assigned with two theta roles agent and theme. Notice that this sentence has no INFL categories to mark the aspects of time frame during the utterance. In order to represent this particular sentence into a tripartite structure of clause, Finite Phrase are used to label the CP since there are no INFL present in this sentence. The tripartite structure of the clause can be seen in (15c):

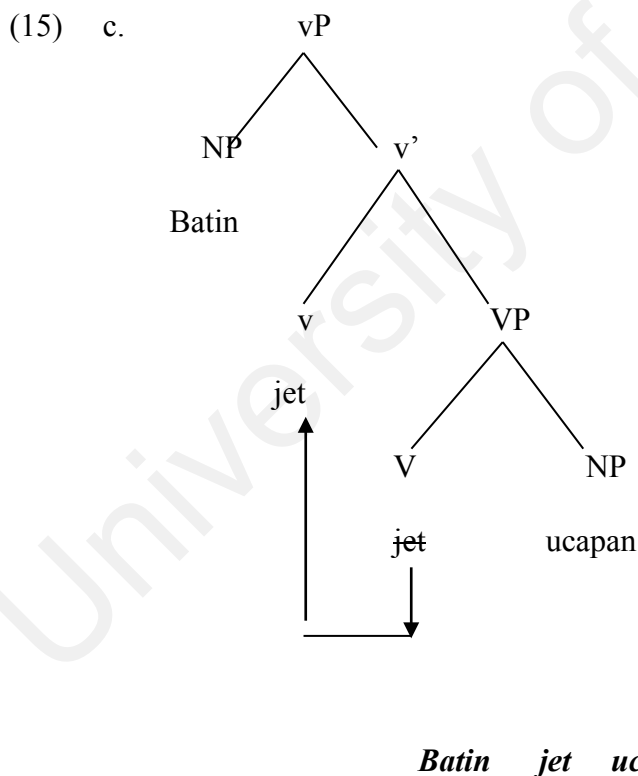


Figure 4.15 The derivation of the Mah meri computational syntactic process



The structure in (15c) has the maximal projection of the vP which is a phase owing to the fact that its argument / thematic structure is fully represented. The small vP immediately dominates the **NP Batin** in [Spec, vP] and the intermediate small v' **jet ucapan 'delivering a speech'**. The categories within the intermediate small v' are the small v-adjoined with the lexical verb **jet 'deliver'** and the complement VP. In return, the VP dominates the deleted lexical verb **jet 'deliver'** marked with the strikethrough and the object argument **NP ucapan 'speech'**. In the case of case features, the nominative case is checked with the External Argument (EA) **NP Batin** by the small v while the accusative case with the NP **ucapan 'speech'** by the lexical verb **jet 'deliver'**. The uninterpretable features are checked and valued and eventually deleted.

Due to this process, vP is regarded as a phase, the whole vP is then transferred to the interface levels for the interpretation at Phonological Form (PF) and Logical Form (LF). In order to perform the next cycle of computation, it is important to note that only the edge and the head of vP are available for the next computational cycle. The remainders heads are to be left as it is. The following computational cycle starts with building up the syntactic object TP as seen in (15d):

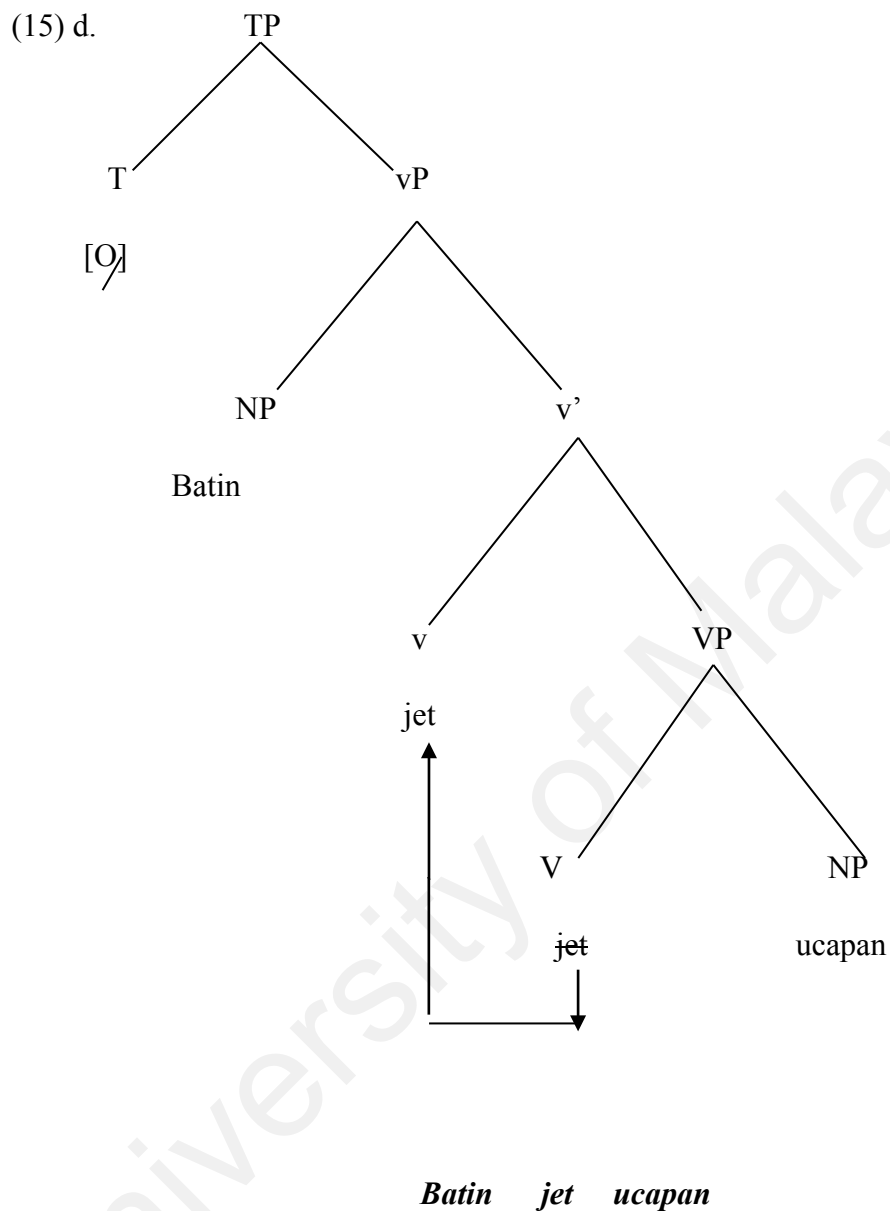


Figure 4.16 The derivation of the Mah meri computational syntactic process

In (15d) the maximal projection TP is headed by the Null T which sister-precedes its complement the vP. This Null T is label with [O] to indicate that there is no lexicalized temporal INFL category in the structure together with the unpronounced

category. Due to this, in PF, it is invisible making it impotent probe in the computation. The following computational cycle starts with building up the head Fin P to represents the **Finite Phrase** [+finite] as seen in (15e):

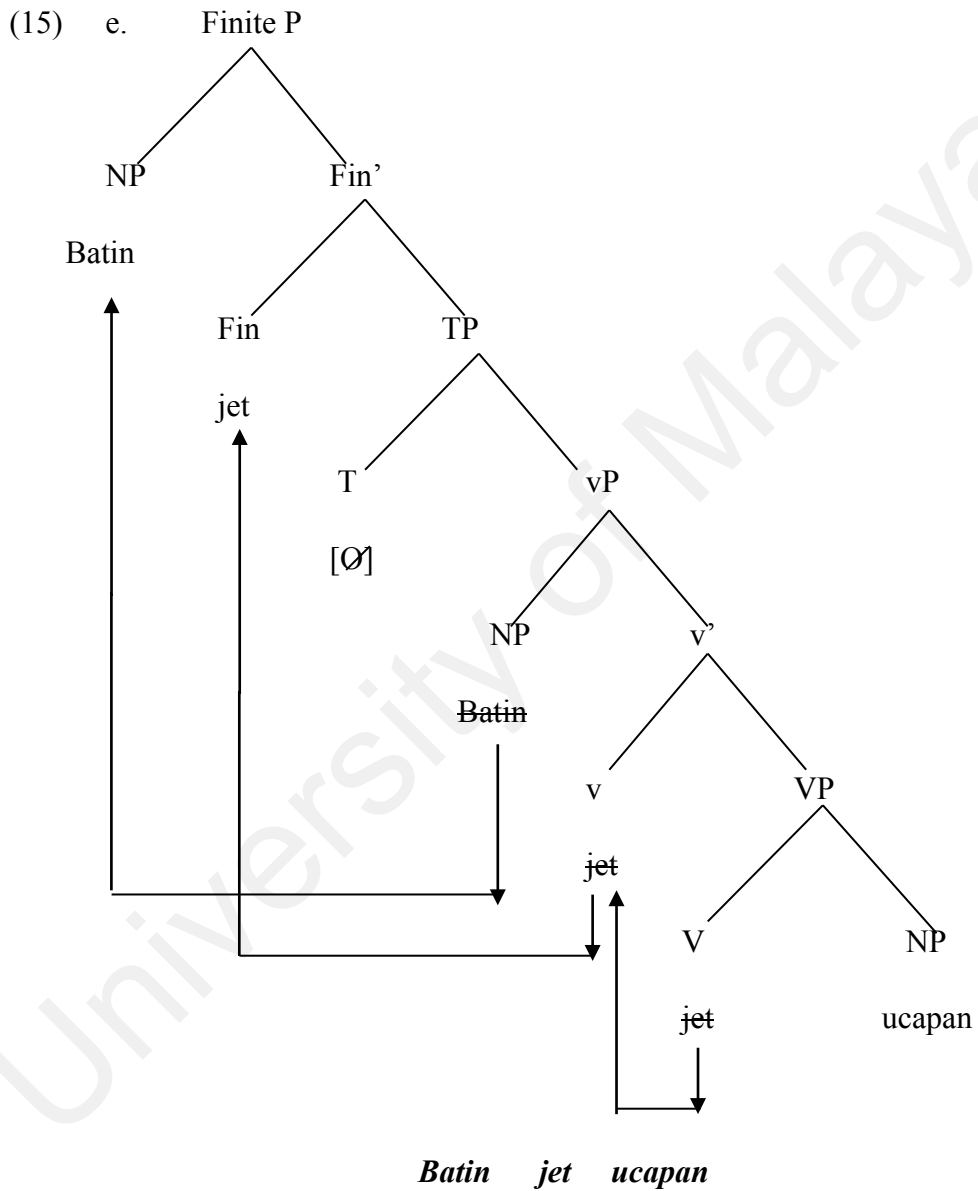


Figure 4.17 The derivation of the Mah meri computational syntactic process

The auxiliary in (15e) carry [EPP] feature and licensed the projection of [Spec, TP]. In the Figure 4.17, the lexical verb movement from the small v to the head Fin is a violation of the principal locality condition Head Movement Constraint (HMC) due to the condition of finite utterance. The following computational cycle continues with building up the higher **ForceP** as seen in (15f).

The category C labeled as Fin, has included the temporal property of the verb. The Force Phrase in the above tree is in lined with the relationship between the discourse and the Finite Phrase. The reason of moving verb is due to the fact that the head Fin is instill with the strong verbal feature attracting the finite verbs.

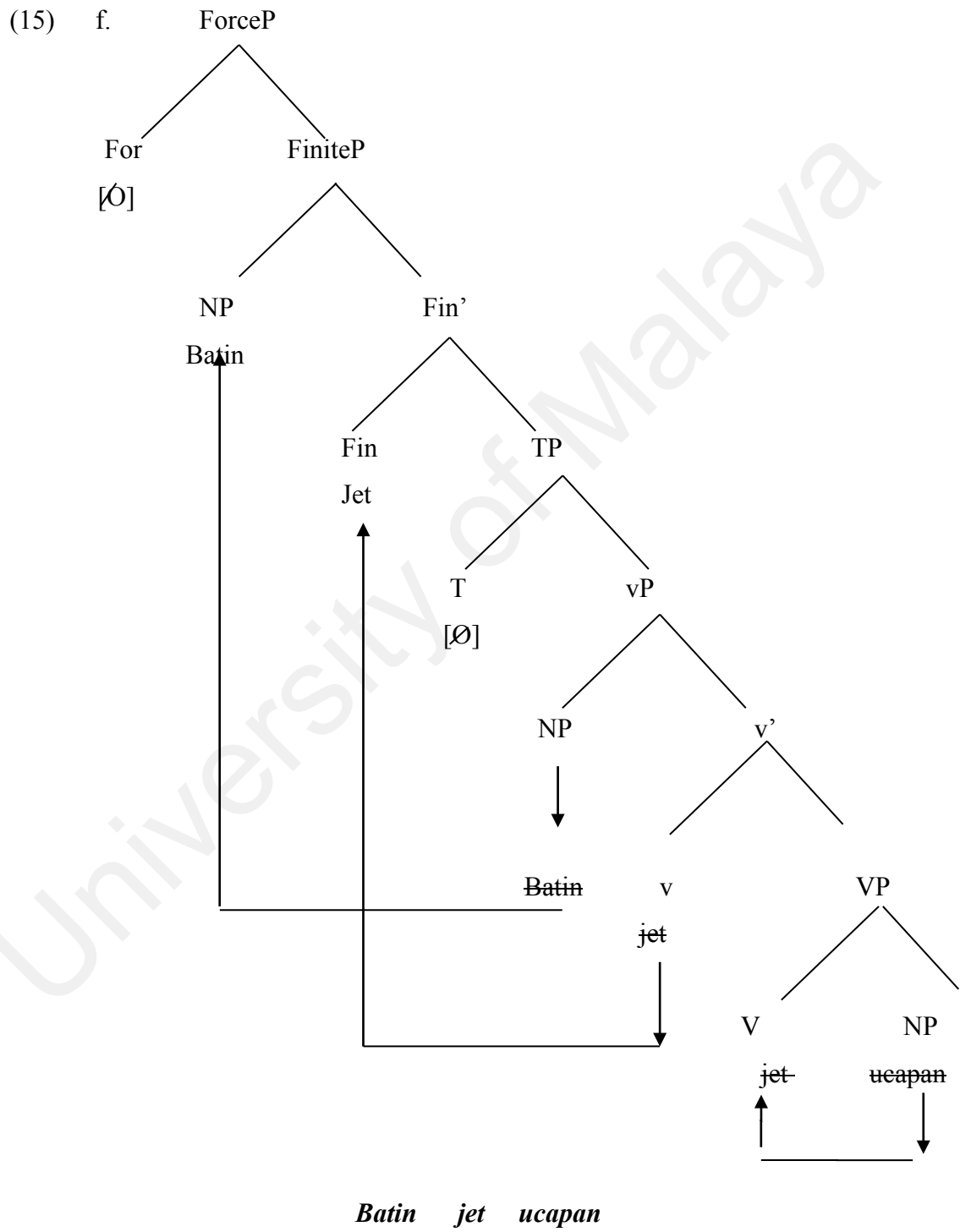


Figure 4.18 The derivation of the Mah meri computational syntactic process

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This final chapter concludes the understanding of Null Case and PRO within the Mah Meri language. It revisits the objectives of the research that had been explained earlier in the earlier chapters. Firstly, this chapter justifies the existence of the Null Case and provides explanation on the presence of non-finite phrases. Besides these two elements of research, it summarizes the pattern of the distribution of PRO within the Mah Meri language as well as the analysis of the PRO as Null Case that is checked by Non-finite phrases.

#### **5.2 PRO Subjects in Mah Meri**

In the discussion of PRO subjects in Mah Meri, it has naturally leads the study to the issue of control. There is a slight deviation about the nature of the subject position of complement clauses and its relation to Case and government. In order to comprehend the clauses, it is necessary to clarify the principles and parameters the analysis that has embedded the clauses containing a non-finite verb in Mah Meri. Specifically, in the terminology of the framework chosen for this study, clauses which have a [-Tense] becomes the foundation of PRO.

### 5.3 Existence of Null Case

The Null argument is a well-known categorization of languages such as Chinese, Italian and Spanish. In order to distinguish the occurrence of Null arguments in these languages, Null Subject Parameter was suggested as part of the Universal Grammar principle. A morphological pattern is unchanging if all the forms in these languages are either morphologically complex or none of them are. Based on the syntactical analysis conducted in this research, Mah Meri has been categorized into the Null Case group because it has no forms that are morphologically complex where in most case like these Null subjects and Null Pronouns are allowed.

So far, the research discussion of syntactic structure has implicitly anticipated that the Mah Meri language is a Null Case language simply because it contains *empty* categories, which refers to the categories that have no overt phonetic form that are often inaudible or silent. The empty categories in Mah Meri language, like in other Null Case languages, play the central role in the Mah Meri grammar theory. Therefore, in this chapter, the research is attempted to deliver a characterization of inversion to compare Mah Meri with some other languages such as Chinese, Italian and Spanish that revolved around the theory of Universal Grammar by using the Null Subject Parameter as advised by Jaeggli and Safir (1989). English is a different case because English uses a ‘mixed’ system. Null subjects especially are not allowed because its morphological complex form, such as *talks, talked, talking* is coexisting with its morphological simple forms such as *talk*. Mah Meri does not own a morphological complex form as the like of English.

In the Null Subject Parameter, it is also stated when a Null Case is also possible. Once the referential value is recovered, only then that the null subject can occur (Jaeggli and Safir, 1989; Rizzi, 1986). Three mechanisms in identifying the null agreements were suggested, which were (i) local agreement which includes the featuring of tense, (ii) a commanding nominal, or (iii) a topic. If either of the two necessary and sufficient conditions is failed to be satisfied, it will result in the prohibition of Null subjects in a language. This is especially when it involved a morphologically standard paradigm and recoverable referential value for the thematic Null subject.

#### **5.4 Non-Finite Clauses in Mah Meri Phrases**

This section discusses some aspects of the syntax of infinitives and provide one further piece of evidence for the lack of a tense domain in Mah Meri. The argument will come from the distribution of *eventive* predicates, which have previously been argued to provide evidence in favour of infinitival tense. However, that the arguments presented in the literature are not conclusive, and that on further inspection, the distribution of *eventive* predicates provides evidence against infinitival tense.

As shown in the findings, *eventive* predicates which often seen as roughly, non-stative, and at the individual level predicates, are possible in future infinitives of Mah Meri but not in simultaneous infinitives because it can only receive a generic or habitual interpretation. Therefore, the conclusion reached in these works is that, in order to express an *eventive* interpretation in Mah Meri, the infinitive has to be in the



progressive form because an *eventive* predicates contain an event variable which must be bound by a modal or temporal operator other than present tense.

## 5.5 Research Limitations

There are several methodological issues in studying about the PRO and Null Case principles and parameters:

- i) In order to demonstrate whether or not a particular principle is operating in their inter-language grammar, many principles are identified. However, the principles and parameters that were developed by grammarians like Chomsky, White, and Cook are mostly involved complex sentences while Mah Meri is a compact language and the comparison is demanding.
- ii) The most controversial methodological issues in Null case and PRO based studies concerns what kind of data to collect. This is problematic because of the need to obtain information about the culture of the speakers rather than their ability to perform specific structures.
- iii) There is also the difficulty of obtaining samples of language use that contain the kinds of complex sentences or structures needed to investigate most principles and parameters.

## 5.6 Suggestions for Future Research

In the Mah Meri domain, the future studies should consider these areas:

- i) To examine the parameter resetting by early childhood language acquisition of Mah Meri as a first language especially in the case of Null Subject value.
- ii) To find out the case of null and displaced subjects in Mah Meri.
- iii) To examine the existence of missing subjects in early child language acquisition of Mah Meri language.
- iv) To identify the norms and usage of Finite or Non-Finite predication in Written Mah Meri.
- v) To find out whether there is an existence of Government-Binding approach in syntactic study of Mah Meri.

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## Appendix A

The interview was recorded and the data is transcribed for the analysis process.

- 01 Ma' nake balu  
*Orang itu berlari*
- 02 Ma' nake baluh laju  
*Orang itu berlari dengan laju*
- 03 Ma' nake hak mani' ngki hak ka cok  
*Orang itu lari tapi tiada orang tahu mana dia pergi*
- 04 Nake  
*Tahu*
- 05 Hak mani' ngki chok  
*Ke mana dia pergi*
- 06 Ngki baluh laju ha' manik ngki chok
- 07 Nake  
*Tapi*
- 08 Ha'  
*Tiada*
- 09 Ma' nake du' hak mani' ngki tuju' hə' ngot  
*Orang itu lari tahu tidak*
- 10 hə' ngot  
*tahu tak tak tahu*
- 11 ngki' du' kawa ngkit hə'  
*orang itu lari kawan dia tahu*  
*orang itu lari tapi kawannya tahu dia akan kembali*
- 12 kawan ngki' sghə' yut uning  
*kawan dia tahu balik kembali*
- 13 ngki' du' dah nihi  
*dia lari sudah semalam*  
*Dia sudah pun lari semalam*



- 14 ngki du' nihi dah  
*dia lari semalam dah*  
*Dia sudah pun lari semalam*
- 16 Bila ngki' du'  
*Bila dia lari?*
- 17 Oh ma' ke' / ma'ke' bajau duk di ke ya'  
*Oh teruknya! Dia dah lari!*
- 18 Oh bajau hə ma' nake du' dah  
*Oh teruknya orang itu lari dah*
- 19 kertas ni bajau  
*Kertas ini teruk (handwriting is incomprehensible)*
- 20 e'el ma' nake bajau  
*perangai orang itu teruk*
- 21 elok lep  
*baik*
- 22 elok həl  
*baik sangat*  
*sangat baik*
- 23 bajau həl  
*teruk sangat*  
*sangat teruk*
- 24 du' le  
*lari la(everyone)*
- 25 hi' du le  
*awak lari lah(specific person)*
- 26 napah  
*bernafas*
- 27 napah alə  
*Bernafas lagi*  
*Masih bernafas*
- 28 ma' nake napah alə  
*orang itu bernafas lagi*  
*orang itu masih bernafas*
- 29 ma' nake' bernapah tapi kawan ngki' keboh dah  
*orang itu bernafas tapi kawan dia mati sudah*

*orang itu masih hidup tapi kawannya sudah mati*

- 30 sama'da  
*sama ada*
- 31 sama'da ngki' bernapah ataupun keboih  
*samaada dia bernafas atau sudah mati*
- 32 ngki' ke' napah alə tapi ngki' punya mungka keboih dah  
*dia bernafas lagi tapi dia punya muka macam dah mati*
- 33 ma' nake napah muntet muntet alə  
*dia (saudara) bernafas sikit sikit*
- 34 muntet muntet alə (as an answer to a question "dah habis meracun?")  
*sikit lagi*
- 35 napah ale ngki' (structure error)
- 36 ngki' napah alə (correct)
- 37 napah ngki' alə (correct)
- 38 napah ale (correct answer for question "macamane ma' nake' nong?"  
atau "macamana mak")
- 39 macamani' keadaan ma' nake?  
*Macamana keadaan orang itu*
- 40 ma' nake' napah ale, ma' ngki' ghasə ghieh alə,  
*orang itu bernafas lagi, mak dia yang rasa dia kan hidup*  
ngki' 'ai/ka'ai beghubat  
*dia bawa berubat*
- 41 moh  
*Boleh*
- 42 ka'ai mani' ke hak mani' haga berubat (answer to question  
"nak bawa ke mana tu?")  
*ke mana nak bawa berubat tu*
- 43 haga  
*nak bawak*
- 44 hak manik ka'ai ke ai berubat manik
- 45 manik  
*ke mana*

- 46 ke  
tu
- 47 haga  
nak
- 48 hak manik haga ka'ai berubat
- 49 'ai  
Bawa
- 50 cincub nong napah 'ale, tapi lepah nake napah ngudah/keboih dah  
*pagi tadi lepas tu nafas dah tiada (mati)*
- 51 cincub nong bernapah 'ale, lepah kenong bernapah ngudah/keboih dah
- 52 napah ngot  
*Tidak bernafas(when encountered dead human or animal)*
- 53 Dak kah ngkit bernapas?  
*Adakah dia bernafas*
- 54 oi, napah ale kah?  
Oi/nama orang
- 55 'ə 'ə cəlew ngkit ke bernapah uning  
*Saya tengok dia tu bernafas kembali*
- 56 dutə suwoh hik hepoi hepoi bernapas  
*Doktor suruh dia perlahan lahan hembus nafas*
- 57 hepoi hepoi muntet  
*perlahan lahan sikit*
- 58 napah nakek hik muntet muntet  
*sikit-sikit/perlahan lahan*
- 59 hik ke  
*awak (for son or relatives)*
- 60 hik ke hepoi hepoi bernapah  
*awak tu perlahankan bernafas*
- 61 napah napah hepoi hepoi la
- 62 napah hik ke bia hepoi hepoi  
*biarla perlahan lahan*
- 63 amo chok? Amo chok hepoi hepoi hepoi

- 64 chok laju laju/cepat cepat  
*jalan cepat (run)*
- 65 chok laju diket  
sikit
- 66 mak nake naca nasik laju (mengata orang)  
*orang itu makan nasi laju*
- 67 awak ke naca hepoi diket  
*tu makan perlahan sikit*
- 68 awak(2 or 3 persons) naca nasik ət  
*awak makan nasi saya*
- 69 hik(a person) naca nasi ət  
*Awak makan nasi saya*
- 70 awak/hik nala naca nasi ət (upset/accusing)  
*awak selalu makan nasi saya*
- 71 haga naca?(invite)  
*Nak makan?*
- 72 haga naca nasi ət?  
*nak makan nasi saya?*
- 73 kənon ngkit naca mak ngkit gətek  
*anak dia makan mak dia tidur*
- 74 adik  
*adik*
- 75 kənon  
*anak*
- 76 mak ngkit gətekek oh ngkit punya khuaaa  
*Orang itu tidur dia berbunyi*
- 77 bajau həl ma' nake hik kaca ngkit kara' ma' ngut  
*dia makan tinggal orang tidak  
teruk betulorang tu makanan tak tinggalkan untuk orang lain*
- 78 gunə ngut həl yek ngkit, ngkit naca bak sha, adik ha naca walə  
*Abang dia makan dulu adik belum makan lagi*
- 79 wa' alə  
belum makan lagi
- 80 naca nama' ngut

- belum makan apa-apa*
- 81 ngkit sghə', naca nga sudu  
*tahu/pandainye*
- 82 ngkit pandai/sghə' ngaleh  
*menyumpit*
- 83 ngkit pandai/sghə' ngaleh
- 84 ngkit sghə' (answering question 'dia tahu menyumpit tak?')
- 85 moh ngaləh alə/moh alə (jawapan soalan 'dia boleh myumpit lagi ke?')
- 86 mak nake moh ngaləh alə kah?
- 87 əntah... moh ka mo ngot ka  
*samaada boleh atau tidak*
- 88 cip  
*burung*
- 89 cip ekor jəlang  
*burung ekor panjang*
- 90 la'at  
*gagak*
- 91 nake cip la'at ka (tak sure gagak ke burung lain)
- 92 nake la'at (mmg sure itu gagak)
- 93 ngkit ngayil ka  
*dia mengail ikan*
- 94 ka bawal  
*ikan bawal*
- 95 hemang  
*ikan sembilang*
- 96 ka dui  
*ikan duri* (dan juga ikan lain yang kecil sbb ikan duri kecil)
- 97 ka bilis  
*ikan bilis*
- 98 ma' cho' pasa nga adik  
*emak pergi pasar dengan adik*

- 99 'ə'ə' igap ka nga teho'ka/pakai tehok
- 100 'ə'ə' cəlew aghik tebenam  
*Saya tengok matahari terbenam*
- 101 aghik  
*temujanji*
- 102 aghik bila?  
*Nk jumpa bila?*
- 103 ngeso'  
*esok*
- 104 bila hik snang? (boleh jawab terus 'ngeso')
- 105 elok həl bintang nga bula ke  
*cantiknya bintang dan bulan*
- 106 lajid/lajin baca buku  
*rajin baca buku*
- 107 lajid həl budak nake baca'  
*rajin betul budak itu baca buku*
- 108 mamat nake lajid baca buku  
*mamat tu rajin baca buku*
- 109 ngkit pandai həl nyanyi lagu' nake  
*dia pandai betul nyanyi lagu itu*
- 110 ma' nake ləbus ngalə  
*orang itu rebus ubi kayu*
- 111 mak 'ə'ə' ləbus ngalə  
*mak saya rebus ubi*
- 112 elok/lawa  
*Cantik*
- 113 kəncu' 'ə'ə' chok səkolah  
*cucu saya pergi sekolah*
- 114 bayam nga ngalə elo' naca  
*bayam dan ubi itu sedap dimakan*
- 115 elo' həl  
*baik betul*
- 116 elo' həl budek nake

- baik betul budak tu*
- 117 wah/elo' həl hik naca  
*wah sedap betul awak makan*
- 118 sədap həl hik naca  
*sedap betul awak makan*
- 119 ca lah nasi' hei ya di' həl na da' ke  
*Makan lah betul nasi yang tak habis tu*
- 120 ca di' həl  
*makan habis betul*  
*habiskan lah makan nasi lebih*
- 121 ədə' kagha' (finish up)  
*jangan tinggal*
- 122 ədə'  
*tinggal*
- 123 kagha' də'
- 124 kagha' ngot
- 125 ca nasi ngot ya di' ədək kagha'
- 124 'ə'ə' ghasə hiju' neneh gəma/air ləbat  
*Saya rasa sejuk sangat sebab hujan lebat*
- 126 'ə'ə' hiju' neneh ai' gəma noho'ə  
*Saya sejuk betul hujan hari ni*
- 127 nini'  
*datuk*
- 128 gəle  
*nenek*
- 129 ai' gəma lebat ho' sejuk həl
- 130 ngkit cho' pusing pusing kampung  
*dia jalan-jalan pusing-pusing kampung*
- 131 ma' nake mərayau rayau hak kampung  
*orang itu merayau rayau kat kampung*
- 132 ti ngki' maham  
*Tangan dia berdarah*

- 133 ngkit ke ceghuh dah ma' nake /kədo nake  
*dia jumpa dah orang tu /perempuan itu*
- 134 kədo  
*perempuan*
- 135 ə'ə' kədo dah  
*saya dah berbini*
- 136 ləmol  
*laki*
- 137 ə'ə' ceghuh dah ləmol nake  
*Saya dah jumpa laki saya*
- 138 ləmol nake ə'ə' ceghuh dah  
*Lelaki itu saya dah jumpa*
- 139 ma' nake elo' /lep  
*orang itu tampan/berbudi bahasa*
- 140 ləmol nake elo'  
*lelaki itu tampan/berbudi bahasa*
- 141 ə'ə' ceghuh dah ma' nake. ma' nake lep  
*Saya dah jumpa orang itu. orang itu tampan/berbudi bahasa*
- 141 mugali' mugali' cho' ha' Bandar. da' nake  
*sekali sekala pergi Bandar. orang itu*
- 142 hik nala hik cho' banting ka?
- 143 Answer: Mugalik mugalik cho' la  
*Sekali sekala ada pergi*
- 144 ngkit kaye tijau  
*dia ternampak ular*
- 145 tijau nake ngkit punya warna hijau  
*Ular itu warna dia hijau*
- 145 dak mui dəi ə'ə' cho' haduk ma' nake  
*ada satu malam saya pergi ke rumah orang itu*
- 146 ngki' ke cho' huki/haduk ayik dəi  
*dia ke sana/ rumah waktu malam*
- 147 haduk ayik dəi ngki' ke cho' (structure error, might wrongly translated  
to *rumah pergi malam*)



- 148 dəi noho' nom khəbo'  
*Malam ini banyak nyamuk*
- 148 do milo noho' elo'  
*air milo ini sedap*
- 149 hayam nake wuk  
*ayam itu berkokok*
- 150 ngkit kənak petot hayam  
*dia dipatuk ayam*
- 151 kəna no'oi kənak?
- 152 Answer:kaka dek kucing  
*dicakar kucing*
- 153 job 'ə'ə' kənak kaka kucing  
*kaki saya kena cakar kucing*
- 154 job 'ə'ə' kaget kucing  
*kaki saya digigit kucing*
- 155 met kucing nake kadui  
*mata kucing itu besar*
- 156 cau nake kənin  
*anjing itu kecil*
- 157 kucing nake kənin  
*kucing itu kecil*
- 158 ngkit ke berenang hak laut  
*dia berenang di laut*
- 159 hek mai kghek ngkit ngkeh, henon kghek gənok uning  
*kelmarin tu*  
*tahun lepas badan dia kurus,tak sampai setahun badan dia gemuk*
- 160 kenon dengan kencu' ngahek haga main bola ka?  
anak dan cucu bergaduh sebab nak main bola tak?
- 161 soalan: ə'əi tanyak, kenon dengan kencu' ngahek haga main bola ka  
nak nama?  
*Bergaduh sebab main bola atau sebaliknya*
- 162 (name)/sini-sini (children or grand-children) gol pinggan nang pəcah  
chok  
Ambil pergi

- wit hak huki/take  
*buang kat sana/sini@situ*
- 163 huki/ləp  
*jauh*
- 164 wit hak take ha  
*buang kat situ*
- 165 gol pinggan pəcah ke wit ləp  
*Ambil pinggan pecah buang jauh*
- 166 adik ə'ə' bədə' hung jəghə'  
*Adik saya jatuh dalam lubang yang dalam*
- 167 hik cho' buru  
*awak pergi memburu*
- 168 hadu nake kadəi  
*rumah itu besar*
- 169 ngki' ke beduh səgham berbanding ngot dəngan ma'  
*dia bina rumah tinggi tidak seperti orang lain*
- 170 baju' nake kabe kulit lo' (long terap)  
*baju itu diperbuat oleh kulit kayu terap*
- 171 pelancong ma' putih nake melawat ə'ə'  
*pelancong orang putih itu melawat kami*
- 172 ma' jobo'  
*orang melayu*
- 172 ma' cina'  
*orang cina*
- 173 katəik/təik dik  
*potong buluh*
- 174 təik dik nga hau  
*potong buluh dengan parang panjang*
- 175 gol hau kadəi  
*ambil parang panjang*
- 176 daging nake elo' alə  
*daging itu segar lagi*
- 177 ngki'kayə' 'a'a' du' ha' məri  
*dia mendengar harimau*

- 178    kegha' melompat-lompat  
*monyet lompat-lompat*
- 179    rumput nake hijau  
*rumpit itu hijau*
- 180    gəlo'  
*ketawa*
- 181    choh nake jəlang  
*tali itu panjang*
- 182    jəlet  
*pendek*
- 183    kakai' kəghek ə'ə'  
*garu badan saya*
- 184    ma' nake kakai' kəghek ngkit  
*orang itu garu badan dia*
- 185    ngki'kapet tijau nake  
*dia pukul ular itu*
- 186    ngki'tiba' hadu' 'ə'ə' kətuk pintu kuat kuat  
*dia datang rumah saya ketuk pintu kuat kuat*
- 187    gali (for 2 – 5 feet hole)
- 188    kuwek(digging 6 inches - small)  
*Korek*
- 188    təkoh nake pəle ləbat (nom həl)  
*pokok itu berbuah lebat (banyak betul)*
- 189    jəmol 'ə'ə' təgət  
*gigi saya patah*
- 190    jəmol 'ə'ə' gohop  
*gigi saya sakit*
- 191    jəmol 'ə'ə' guk həl/kuat həl  
*gigi saya kuat*
- 192    cit nake tək  
*burung itu terbang*
- 193    katəik  
*tolong potong*

- 194 kagok long nake  
*menebang kayu itu*
- 195 ‘ə’ə’ chok səkolah nga sikal  
*Saya pergi sekolah dengan basikal*
- 196 ngkit kawit/uwet pəle niyu nga marah  
*dia membuang buah kelapa sawit dengan marah*
- 197 ma’nake məngukir untuk aik moyang ləbih siang/ləbih awal  
*orang itu mengukir untuk hari moyang lebih awal*
- 198 ngkit be ləbih siang  
*L ebih awal*
- 199 bangkai nake ləpot  
*bangkai itu reput*
- 200 ‘ə’ə’ kaye bangkai ntah nam sə bangkai nye tapi ləpot dah  
*Saya tengok bangkai ntah bangkai ape tapi sudah reput*
- 201 ma’ masak sayo nga kəpoh bak aik də’ək  
*emak masak sayur dan telur pada waktu petang*
- 202 aik dəi  
*hari malam*
- 203 aik gəlam  
*hari gelap*
- 204 ngkit baring bak cini duh kəghet ngkit lətih  
*dia baring belakang rumah dengan badan yang letih*
- 205 baring tohok ghak  
*baring sini saja*
- 206 tampos  
*Sapu*
- 207 tampos lantai nake  
*sapu lantai itu*
- 208 brenang do jəpek ghak (instruct a child to swim in swallow water)  
*berenang air cetek saja*
- 209 ngki basuh həndi hak do gədik  
*dia basuh kain di sungai*
- 300 lukak nake bəngkak

- luka itu bengkak*
- 301 'ə'ə' əmpai haga kirə  
*Saya baru nak kira*
- 302 'ə'ə' haga əmpai kirə hagak nake  
*Saya baru nak kira harga itu*
- 303 'ə'ə' haga kirə hagak nake  
*Saya baru kira harga itu*
- 304 haga  
*hendak*
- 305 əmpai  
*baru/mula*
- 306 'ə'ə' cəlew besen aik dəi  
*Saya tengok tv waktu malam*
- 307 cohoi  
*sian*
- 308 də'əh  
*petang*
- 309 budek nake kəna kapet ngkit ke mənipu  
*budak itu kena pukul kerana dia menipu*
- 310 ke  
*kerana*
- 311 pəgə'  
*pegang*
- 312 ngkik cəkek ma' pəncuri  
*dia cekik orang pencuri*
- 313 ngkik tekam buang sampai kəbois  
*dia tikam beruang sampai mati*
- 314 ngkik tekam buang nake nga kuat sampai kəbois  
*dia tikam beruang itu dengan kuat sampai mati*
- 315 bədə'  
*jatuh*
- 316 ngkik bədə' nga kuat  
*dia jatuh dengan kuat*

- 317 kabə'  
*ikat*
- 318 ngkik ke ya təkoh laju  
*dia panjat pokok dengan laju*
- 319 ngkik luncat bədə' ngot hak huke  
*Dia loncat tak jatuh kat lubang*
- 319 ngki' ke umo ma tuh tahun kəghet ngki sihat alə  
*dia sudah berumur seratus tahun tetapi badan dia sihat lagi*
- 320 bungak nake kəmbang  
*bunga itu berkembang*
- 321 posmen nake tibak aik na samak  
*posmen itu datang pada waktu yang sama*
- 322 jən  
*berdiri*
- 323 kub  
*duduk*
- 324 kub le  
*duduklah*
- 325 met kəlep kəlep  
*mata berkelip kelip*
- 326 lidah jələr  
*jelir lidah*
- 327 bauk  
*bau*
- 328 bau lo'om/b  
*bau wangi*
- 329 bau hu'ut  
*busuk*

- End -

**Appendix B**

***LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS***

**SHAZLIN NIZA AB RAZAK  
FACULTY OF LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGES  
UNIVERSITY MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

**THESIS TITLE: THE DISTRIBUTION OF NULL CASE AND PRO IN MAH MERI  
PHRASES**

**THEME: NULL AND PRO**

**PARTICIPANT: TOK BATIN OF THE MAH MERI TRIBE**

**LOCATION: PULAU CAREY**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The list of questions were asked to the head of the Mah Meri tribe in Pulau Carey. The medium of language is Bahasa Melayu. He is a bilingual speaker whereby he is fluent in both Bahasa Melayu and Mah Meri Language. The questions addressed to the participant are categorized into :

## BACKGROUND OF THE PARTICIPANT

1. *Boleh bagitahu nama Tu an Batin dan berapa umur Tok Batin?*

*Tell me your name and how old are you?*

2. *Sudah berapa lama menjadi Tok Batin?*

*How long have you become the Tok Batin?*

3. *Sudah kah berkahwin dan mempunyai berapa anak?*

*Are you married and how many kids do you have?*

4. *Apakah pekerjaan Tok Batin selain menjadi penghulu kampung?*

*What do you do for a living apart from being the head of village?*

5. *Selain Bahasa Mah Meri, bahasa apakah lagi yang Tok Batin fasih?*

*Besides Mah Meri language, what other languages do you speak?*

6. *Apakah agama Tok Batin?*

*What religion are you?*

7. *Adakah Tok Batin sangat fasih dalam percakapan Bahasa Mah Meri?*



*Do you consider yourself fluent in speaking Mah Meri language?*

### **BACKGROUND OF THE VILLAGERS**

1. *Berapa ramai lagi masih mengamalkan Bahasa Mah Meri sebagai Bahasa pengantar?*

*How many of the villagers still speak Mah Meri language?*

2. *Adakah generasi muda di kampong ini masih bercakap Bahasa Mah Meri?*

*As for the younger generation in this village, do they still speak Mah Meri language?*

3. *Sekiranya generasi muda ini masih bercakap Bahasa Mah Meri, adakah mereka fasih dan sejauh mana kefasihan bercakap mereka?*

*If the younger generation still speak Mah Meri language, how fluent are they?*

### **LEXICAL (INCLUDING NOUN, VERB, ADJECTIVE, ADVERB AND PARTICIPLE)**

1. *Apakah perkataan '**orang**' dalam versi Mah Meri?*

*How do you say '**people**' in Mah Meri?*

2. *Apakah perkataan '**lari**' dalam versi Mah Meri?*

*How do you say '**run**' in Mah Meri?*

3. *Apakah perkataan '**makan**' dalam versi Mah Meri?*

*How do you say '**eat**' in Mah Meri?*

4. *Apakah perkataan '**pergi**' dalam versi Mah Meri?*

How do you say **'pergi'** in Mah Meri?

5. Apakah perkataan **'kawan'** dalam versi Mah Meri?

How do you say **'friend'** in Mah Meri?

6. Apakah perkataan **'baik'** dalam versi Mah Meri?

How do you say **'good'** in Mah Meri?

7. Boleh kah anda berikan beberapa perkataan lain didalam Mah Meri?

Can you give me examples of other words in Mah Meri language?

#### SENTENCES

1. Berikan ayat yang lengkap untuk **'Orang itu lari'** dalam versi Mah Meri.

Can you give me a Mah Meri sentence version of the phrase **'That person ran'**

2. Berikan ayat yang lengkap untuk **'Orang itu lari tahu tidak'** dalam versi Mah Meri.

Can you give me a Mah Meri sentence version of the phrase **'Do you know that that person ran'**

3. Berikan ayat yang lengkap untuk **'Orang itu lari tahu tidak'** dalam versi Mah Meri.

Can you give me a Mah Meri sentence version of the phrase **'Do you know that that person ran'**

4. Berikan ayat yang lengkap untuk **'Baik sangat'** dalam versi Mah Meri dan beberapa ayat yang menggunakan perkataan **'sangat'**.

Can you give me a Mah Meri sentence version of the phrase **'Very good'** and

give me sentences using the word **'very'**.

5. Berikan ayat yang lengkap untuk **'samaada dia benafas atau sudah mati'** dalam versi Mah Meri dan beberapa ayat yang menggunakan perkataan **'nafas'** dan **'mati'**.

Can you give me a Mah Meri sentence version of the phrase **'Whether he is still breathing or already dead'** and give me sentences using the word **'breathe'** and **'dead'**.

6. Berikan beberapa ayat lain dalam versi Mah Meri

Please provide some sentences in Mah Meri language.

#### NON FINITE SENTENCES

1. Didalam Bahasa Mah Meri adakah wujudnya dua ayat yang lengkap yang digabungkan menjadi satu. Setelah digabungkan ayat tersebut tetap membawa maksud. Sebagai contoh ayat **'Doktor suruh dia'** dan ayat **'perlahan lahan hembus nafas'** adalah dua ayat berasingan. Jika digabungkan akan menjadi ayat lengkap seperti **'Doktor suruh dia perlahan lahan hembus nafas'**

In Mah Meri language, can we combine two different sentences that is already complete to form a full sentence that carries a proper message? For example a full sentence of **'The doctor asked him'** and another full sentence **'breathe slowly'** is being combined into **'The doctor asked him to breathe slowly'**.

2. Didalam Bahasa Mah Meri adakah wujudnya dua ayat yang lengkap yang digabungkan menjadi satu. Setelah digabungkan ayat tersebut tetap membawa maksud. Sebagai contoh ayat **'Orang itu masih bernafas'** dan ayat **'kawan dia sedang nazak'** adalah dua ayat berasingan. Jika digabungkan akan menjadi ayat lengkap seperti **'Orang itu masih bernafas tetapi kawan die sedang nazak'**.

*In Mah Meri language, can we combine two different sentences that is already complete to form a full sentence that carries a proper message? For example a full sentence of 'That person is still breathing' and another full sentence 'his friend is dying' is being combined into 'That person is still breathing but his friend is dying'.*

3. Adakah Tok Batin faham tentang apa yang saya maksud kan dengan gabungan 2 ayat menjadikan satu ayat yang lengkap. Sekiranya ye, boleh kan Tok Batin berikan beberapa contoh ayat.

*Do you understand what do I mean by combining to complete sentence to form a proper sentence that still carries the same meaning. If so, please come up with some other examples.*

### **NULL CASE AND PRO**

1. Didalam ayat Mah Meri adakah wujud nya sesuatu yang tidak perlu disebut, namun ayat nya betul dan difahami. Sebagai contoh ayat '**Teruknya! Dia dah lari!**'. Jadi kita faham bahawa keadaan orang yang '**teruk**' adalah 'orang yang sama yang telah lari?'

*In a Mah Meri sentence, are there such thing as a missing subject but the sentence is comprehensible. For example, for the sentence '**Terrible! He has ran**', we know that '**Terrible**' refers to 'the person who has ran'?*

2. Setujukah anda sekiranya terdapat ayat Mah Meri yang tidak lengkap (dengan ketiadaan perkataan) namun ayatnya mudah difahami?

*Do you agree that sentences without vocabulary in Mah Meri phrases is still understandable?*

3. Sekiranya anda bersetuju dengan soalan sebelum ini, nyatakan beberapa ayat di dalam Mah Meri.

*If you agree to the previous question, please provide more examples*

### **GENERAL QUESTION**

1. Pada pendapat Tok Batin, adakah Bahasa Mah Meri semakin pupus?

*In your opinion, do you think the Mah Meri language is dying?*

2. Sekiranya benar Bahasa Mah Meri semakin pupus, ada atau tidak langkah yang dilakukan untuk memastikan Bahasa ini tidak pupus?

If the Mah Meri language is dying, what do you do to preserve the language?

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