

Balinese adverbial *wh*-phrases—movement for focus

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In Balinese, adverbial *wh*-words (i.e., *dija* ‘where’, *pidan* ‘when’, *kénkénange* ‘how’, and *adi* ‘why’) cannot appear in situ:

- (1) a. **pidan** cai ngigel?
when you dance
‘When did you dance?’
- b. *cai ngigel **pidan**?
you dance when
Intended: ‘When did you dance?’

The obligatory fronting cannot be viewed as canonical *wh*-movement. Long-range extraction of Balinese *wh*-adverbials is prohibited, even with the bridge verb *ningeh* ‘hear’ as in (2).¹

- (2) ***pidan_i** Madé ningeh [Koming naar poh-é t_i]?
when Madé hear Koming eat mango-DEF
Intended: ‘When_i did Madé hear [that Koming ate the mango t_i]?’

This paper investigates the motivation for the obligatory fronting and its potential landing site. We argue that Balinese fronts its *wh*-adverbials to a focus projection, because they are inherently focused and must check a focus feature. Their seemingly puzzling distribution is therefore explained by virtue of the system of focus marking in Balinese.

Focus in Balinese is indicated by preposing or by the presence of the particle *nak* (Arka, 2003), as in (3). *Nak* can occur in the subordinate clauses as in (4); however, it cannot appear within “central” adverbial clauses, which semantically contribute to the event structure and syntactically lack the appropriate landing site for fronted constituents (Haegeman, 2012). (5) is an example:

- (3) a. Koming nak naar poh.
Koming FOC eat mango
‘Koming ATE MANGOES.’
- b. (nak) naar poh, Koming.
FOC eat mango Koming
‘Koming ATE MANGOES.’

¹*Dija* ‘where’ can exceptionally move long distance, which is considered to be related to the flexible distribution of prepositional phrases (PPs) in Balinese. The word *dija* was derived from a PP, *di ja(ha)* ‘at where’ (c.f., Barber, 1979).

- (4) anak né [**nak** naar poh] timpuge baan polisi-é.
 person this FOC eat mango be.hit by police-DEF
 ‘This man, who ATE A MANGO, was hit by the policeman.’
- (5) * [ulian Putu **nak** maling poh] Koming gedeg.
 because Putu FOC steal mango Koming angry.
 Intended: Koming was angry because Putu STOLE MANGOES.’

The parallelism between focalized elements and *wh*-adverbials is observed. (6) shows *pidan* ‘when’ can carry a focus feature overtly; just like *nak*-phrases, *pidan* is not compatible with the occurrence of a preposed verb phrase (7a). In addition, *pidan* is not compatible with the presence of a *nak* before another constituent, whereas multiple *nak*-phrases are allowed to appear in situ (8b).² This indicates that fronted *wh*-adverbials and in situ *nak*-phrases are licensed by the same head in Balinese (c.f., Cinque, 1990; Simpson, 2000).

- (6) nak pidan Koming ngigel?
 FOC when Koming dance
 ‘WHEN did Koming dance?’
- (7) a. * pidan (nak) ngigel, Koming?
 when (FOC) dance Koming
 ‘When did Koming DANCE?’
 b. * nak dibi (nak) ngigel, Koming.
 Foc yesterday FOC dance Koming
 ‘YESTERDAY Koming DANCED.’
- (8) a. * pidan Koming nak ngigel?
 when Koming FOC dance
 ‘When did Koming DANCE?’
 b. nak dibi Koming nak ngigel.
 FOC yesterday Koming FOC dance
 ‘YESTERDAY Koming DANCED.’

If *wh*-adverbials are a subset of focalized elements, they will show the same pattern as *nak*-phrases shown in the environments of (4) and (5)—they are expected to be able to occur within a subordinate clause but not within a central adverbial clause. This prediction is partially borne out. All but *adi* ‘why’ follow the pattern in (9) and (10).

- (9) anak [né **pidan** naar poh] timpuge baan polisié?
 anak COMP when eat mango be.hit by police
 ‘When_i was a person [that ate mangoes t_i] hit by the policeman?’
- (10) * [ulian **pidan** putu maling poh] koming gedeg?
 because when Putu steal mango Koming angry
 Intended: ‘When_i was Koming angry [because Putu stole mangoes t_i]?’

In closing, we showed that (i) *wh*-adverbials and focalized elements mirror each other’s behavior and (ii) the obligatory fronting of *wh*-adverbials is, in fact, movement to a location reserved for a focus. Future goals are to clarify (i) the behavior of *adi* ‘why’ and (ii) some discrepancies in the distribution of *nak*-phrases and *wh*-adverbials. The ungrammaticality of (11a) contrasted with (11b) can be explained by the intervention of the indefinite noun phrase that occurs higher than *nak*. However, the ungrammaticality of (12a) contrasted with (12b) needs more explanation.

²We gratefully adopt the suggestion of reviewer #2 to correct the grammaticality of (8b) as well as the glossing of (4).

- (11) a. * anak len **nak** nyemak nyuh-é ento.
 person other FOC take coconut-Def that
 Intended: ‘Someone else TOOK THAT COCONUT.’
- b. **pidan** anak len nyemak nyuh-é ento?
when person other take coconut-Def that
 ‘When did someone else take that coconut?’
- (12) a. * Koming ngigel nak pidan?
 Koming dance FOC where
 ‘Where did Koming dance?’
- b. Koming ngigel nak dibi.
 Koming dance FOC yesterday
 ‘Koming danced YESTERDAY.’

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