WH-QUESTION FORMATION IN HNARING LUTUV

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this squib, we present a brief description of content question (i.e., wh-question) formation in Lutuv. We investigate question formation using five common wh-words. The data herein demonstrate that wh-questions are derived from declarative sentences by adding two elements to the construction: a wh-word and a question particle. The former is often in sentence-initial position, and the latter follows the wh-expression.

2. WH-QUESTION FORMATION

Placing wh-words in phrase-initial position is common cross-linguistically (Dryer, 1991). While question formation in verb-final languages tends to disfavor fronting wh-words to utterance-initial position due to strong pressure for adjacency of wh-words and verbs (Hawkins, 2004), this is not generally the case in Lutuv. As noted above, wh-words are often in utterance-initial position. When forming content questions, languages may additionally use question particles, morphemes which are obligatory in interrogatives but do not carry any referential meaning (Luo and Wu, 2017). Both question words and question particles are found in Lutuv (see example sentences in Section 3). The primary wh-words in Lutuv are provided in (1):

(1) Wh-words in Lutuv

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ahung</td>
<td>‘who’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khaapa</td>
<td>‘what’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khaaning</td>
<td>‘when’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khaalie</td>
<td>‘where’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khaanakaw</td>
<td>‘why’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. A BASIC ILLUSTRATION OF WH-QUESTION FORMATION IN LUTUV

The sentences in examples (2-4) allow for comparison between declarative sentences and the content question forms derived from them. In (2a), (3a), and (4a), we observe that declarative sentences in Lutuv are generally verb-final.1 As seen in (2b-c), (3b), (4b-c), wh-questions consist of an utterance-initial wh-word followed by the question particle ma. Note that this question particle is also used phrase-finally in polar question marking (see Benavides & Gray 2023, this volume). What can also be observed in (2-4) is that the tendency for verb-final word order is maintained in content questions, though the order of the nominal arguments may change.

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1 See other papers in this volume for more on word order.
(2) a. Capaapa na ahe a ce.
   man FOC mango 3SS bite
   ‘The man bit the mango.’

   b. [Ahung ma] ahe a ce?
   who Q mango 3SS bite
   ‘Who bit the mango?’

   c. [Khaapa ma] capaapa ta a ce?
   what Q man ACT 2 3SS bite
   ‘What did the man bite?’

(3) a. Uv ca ing lie na a aw.
   dog TOP house LOC FOC 3SS be
   ‘The dog is at home.’

   b. [Khaalie ma] uv ca a aw?
   where Q dog TOP 3SS be
   ‘Where is the dog?’

(4) a. Cawsaapaa ta saa kha avuocharing a ce.
   person ACT meat DEI yesterday 3SS ate
   ‘The man ate the meat yesterday.’

   b. [Khaaning ma] cawsaapaa ta saa a ce?
   when Q person ACT meat 3SS eat
   ‘When did the man eat the meat?’

   c. [Khaanakaw ma] cawsaapaa ta saa a ce?
   why Q person ACT meat 3SS eat
   ‘Why did the man eat the meat?’

4. NOTEWORTHY OBSERVATIONS, FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This paper demonstrates the basic structure of wh-questions in Lutuv and provides examples of the five major wh-words. Content questions are formed with a question word and the question particle ma. Though verb final languages are reported to favor in situ wh-question formation (Dryer 1991), in Lutuv wh-question words often appear in sentence-initial position. Although a syntactic analysis is not provided here, future work on question formation in Lutuv could investigate whether this is related to wh-raising. There may be other additional wh-words in Lutuv not provided as a part of this paper. Additionally, investigation of question formation in Lutuv would benefit from an analysis of prosody in the language, as wh-questions may be associated with a falling pitch contour.

Lutuv has a differential nominal marking system which is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., grammatical role, semantic role, information structure). <ta> at first appeared to be an ergative marker: it often (but not always) marks agentive subjects of transitive verbs. Its distribution is complex, however, and is under ongoing investigation. Until we better understand the distribution and function, we consider it to be marking the role of “actor”, glossed ACT according to the Leipzig glossing conventions.
REFERENCES


