

## Processes of Question Formation in Bodo

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**ABSTRACT:** *The questioning or Interrogative is a part of grammatical device discussed under the sentences function or sometimes on Semantic. In Bodo language, the question sentences can form through the question words, particle, suffix and intonation. The question words and particle can drop in different position i.e. front, initial and final. Sometimes the particle has done two functions at the same time as question particle and conjunction. To form the question, the intonation is the most useful in language. The main objective of this study is how to form the question sentences in Bodo language. Here it is also focusing on the structure of question formation.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Question, Question Words, Suffix, Particle, Intonation*

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### I INTRODUCTION

Bodo language developed from the Bodo-Garo sub-group of the Tibeto-Burman branch of Sino-Tibetan family. The languages speakers are aspirated in the North-East of India (Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh) and adjoining area of Nepal and Bhutan. Bodo language is an associate language of the state of Assam. Among the tribe of Assam, Bodos are the single largest community. According to census 2001 and 2011 of India, the number of the language speaker is 1296162 and 1363735

### II OBJECTIVE:

The main objective of this paper is focusing on the structure and process of the question formation.

### III METHODOLOGY:

The descriptive analysis method is adopted for the study of the interrogative or question. For the propose topic, the data have been collected from both primary and secondary. Primary data have been collected from different native speakers of this language. Secondary data have been collected from various books and magazines.

### IV DISCUSSION AND FINDING:

A term used in the classification of SENTENCE FUNCTIONS and define sometime on GRAMMATICAL and sometime on SEMANTIC or SOCIOLINGUISTIC grounds..... in grammatical discussion, questions are usually referred to an INTERROGATIVE INFORM (Crystal, David, 1985; A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics, P-294).

#### 1.1 Process of question formation in Bodo:

The process of formation in Bodo language can form within four processes. The processes are discussing in the below-

##### 1.1.1 By using Questioning words

In all languages, questioning words are use to form a question sentence. The questioning words are mostly useful in the place of noun, pronoun, adjective and adverb words in Bodo because questioning words are represented in several grammatical categories. The questioning words are given below-

Grammatical Categories	Question Words	Gloss
Pronoun	stur	Who
	ma	What
	bobe~mabe	Which
Adjective	'besen~beseban~bese'	How much/many
Adverb	boha	Where
	mabla	When
	manu	Why
	mabuurui ~ buurui	How

Especially the questioning word 'sur' is used for human and animate nouns; 'ma' for human, animate and thing; 'bobe~mabe' and 'besen~beseban~bese' for quantity; 'boha' for the place; 'mabla' for time, 'manu' for any reason and 'maburui~burui' for manner. The questioning words are always seeking the missing information in the sentences to obtain clear information or conformation of the question.

Generally, the question words are put in front position to form the question sentence as compare to English language. But it is important to note here that in Bodo language the question words can be used to the position in front, initial and final of the sentences. For examples-

**a. Front Position:-**

- i) ma nagir-duŋ nuŋ-thaŋ  
What search-Pr.CONT you-HonF  
What are you searching?
- ii) sur za-naj bedor-khuu  
Who eat-IMPS meat-ACC (imperative suffix)  
Who is eat the meat?
- iii) maburui dong nuŋ-thaŋ-a  
How have you-HonF-NOM  
How are you?

In the above examples question's no i) 'ma' question word used in different sense, where the questioner does not have any idea, it may be human, animal and things. The answer depend upon the replier of this question, the answer of the 'ma' may be as-

- aŋ mansi nagir-duŋ. (I am searching man.)
- aŋ burma nagir-duŋ. (I am searching goat.)
- aŋ khultum nagir-duŋ. (I am searching pen.)

Like question no i), question's no ii) 'sur' questioning word also denotes two sense, as human and animal. The answer may be the question's as..... which is depending upon the replier.

- bedor-khuu Anil-a zalaŋ-bay. (Anil eaten the meat)
- bedor-khuu suima-a zalaŋ-duŋ. (Dog eaten the meat)

The question no iii) is simple, the questioning word 'maburui' denotes only one meaning. The answer may be 'muzaŋ' (fine) or 'gazri' (not fine). It is depend on the replier.

**b. Initial Position:-**

- (i) ada-a boha thaŋ-duŋ  
Elder brother-NOM where go-Pr.CONT  
Where did brother gone?
- (ii) bi-khuu aŋ maburui nagar-nu ha-guun  
He-ACC I how to leave-SUB can-FUT  
How can I leave him?
- (iii) nuŋ mabla than-guun?  
you when go-FUT  
When will you go?

The above examples of questioning words 'boha' 'maburui' and 'mabla' are denoting only one meaning. The question words are seeking the hidden/missing information of those sentences. In those examples, the question words are using in the initial position but also the question words can form the question sentences.

**c. Final Position:-**

- (i) be-ni uŋthi-a ma  
This-GEN mean-NOM what  
What is the meaning?
- (ii) nuŋ-sur bobe/boha-ni  
You-PLs which-GEN  
Which place are you?
- (iii) alu-ni besen-a bese~besen~beseban?  
Alu-GEN cost-NOM how much  
How much is the cost of the potato?

In the above examples, we can find out that the questioning words are inserting in the final position of the sentences and can also form the question sentence.

### 1.1.2 By using Question suffixes:

In Bodo language, by added suffixes to the roots can be formed question sentences. The question suffixes are {-laj} and {-khuu} which is most useful in Bodo. The detail of the suffixes are given below-

**{-laj}** : The suffix is attached to the noun and pronoun to form question sentence. The question suffix is denoted the meaning association and sometime the suffix is follow the question words 'ma' (what), 'sur' (who), 'boha' (where) and bobe (which). For examples-

- (i) A. Hari-a                    gubaŋ                    raŋ                    doŋ  
 Hari-NOM                    much                    money                    has  
 Hari has much money.
- B. nuŋ-ha-laj                    ~                    nuŋ-laj  
 You-NOM-QM                    you-QM  
 Are you?
- (ii) bizab-khuu-laj                    sur                    laŋ-naŋ  
 Book-ACC-QM                    who                    to take out-IMPS (imperative suffix)  
 Who is the book taking out?

Here, it is to be noted that the QM {-laj} cannot attached directly to the nouns, it is attached after the case markers. Though, the suffix is always keep help of the case markers and plural markers. It also important that the QM {-laj} is different in order, request and mutual denoting suffix {-laj}.

**{-khuu}** : The question marker {-khuu} is attached to verbs to form the question sentences. The QM is used in the immediate past tense. But it is important to be noted that the QM cannot form the question sentence directly without question words. For examples

- (iii) nuŋ                    manu                    thaŋ-khuu  
 you                    why                    go-QM  
 why did you go?
- (iv) be-khuu                    sur                    mau-khuu  
 This-ACC                    who                    do-QM  
 Who did this done?

In the above examples (iii) and (iv) the suffix {-khuu} is attached to the verbs to form the question sentences by following the question words. It is important to be noted that in this sentences without question words or question suffix {-khuu} cannot form the question sentence. It means that both are important in the above sentence to form the question sentences. Among them, if anyone leaves than the sentences are incomplete. So, both are equally important.

### 1.1.3 Question particle

Question particle is a particle which is used to form the question sentences. In Bodo language have variety of particles to form the question sentences. The particles are 'da' 'na' and 'nama'. The examples are given below-

**'da'** : The question particle 'da' is use to know clearly or to leave the confusion. The particles always stay at the final position of the sentences to form the interrogative sentences. For examples-

- (i) nuŋ                    Anil                    da  
 you                    Anil                    QP  
 Are you Anil?
- (ii) bi-u                    uŋkham                    za-baj                    da  
 he-NOM                    rice                    eat-PST                    QP  
 has he eaten rice?
- (iii) nuŋ                    muija                    uŋkham                    za-akhui  
 You                    yesterday                    rice                    eat-NEG  
 noŋuu                    da?  
 Tag                    QP  
 You didn't eaten rice yesterday, did you?

Generally, the question particle 'da' is used to form the Yes/No question and tag question. In the above examples, it wants to know the clarification that it is Yes/No.

The 'da' denotes various meaning by position, when it is used in the front and initial position of the sentences it is denoting 'now'. On the other hand, when it is attach to the verb roots it is denote as a negative prefix in Bodo language. For examples-

- (iv) da nuŋ ma mau-duŋ?                    (what are you doing now ?)
- (v) Anaru-a da boha thaju?                    (where is Anaru staying now ?)
- (vi) nuŋ da-za.                    (you don't eat)

In the above examples (iv) and (v) 'da' is not indicate the question particle, where it indicates 'now' in the sentences. The examples 'da' has own meaning to indicate the meaning. Whereas in examples (vi) it is represented as negative prefix.

**'na'** : The particle is also used to form the interrogative sentences and it is used for Yes/No question and tag question. The question particle can use in different position of the sentences in Bodo language. But also the particle can form the interrogative sentences by using in different position. The examples are given below-

**A. Front position:**

The QP can drop in the initial position of the sentences to form the question sentence. For examples-

(vii) na bi-uu aŋ-kuu gazri mun-duŋ?  
QP he-NOM I-ACC bad to feel-Pr.CONT  
Did he mind me?

(viii) na nuŋ phui-a (phuija)?  
QP you come-NEG  
Do you not come?

When the particle 'na' put in the front position of the sentences it is used in confusing sense or want to know the clarification.

**B. Initial position:**

The 'na' particle can also drop in the initial position of the sentences. It is to be noted that when the particle is drop in the initial position it is doing two functions i.e. conjunction as well as question particle. For examples-

(ix) Hari-a phui-gun na phui-a?  
Hari-NOM come-FUT QP come-NEG  
Will Hari come or not?

(x) nuŋ munthi-u na munthi-a?  
You know-HAB QP know-NEG  
Do you know or not?

When the particle is used in the initial position of the sentence it is represented two options. But among two options, only one can respond. It means that only one is correct among two options, it may be 'phui-gun', 'munthi-u' or 'phui-a', 'munthi-a'. Here it is to be noted that among two options one option is occur positive form and another one is occur negative form. On the other hand both examples (ix) and (x) has two sentence as-

a) Hari-a phui-gun a) hari-a phui-a  
b) nuŋ munthi-u b) nuŋ munthi-a

It is seen that both have two sentences and the QP is combined the two sentences and form a compound sentence, whereas even indicated as a question sentence. Here the QP 'na' can indicate two function at the same time by dropping in the initial position.

**C. Final position:**

The QP is not only drop in the front and initial position but also drop in the final position of the sentences. For examples-

For examples-

(xi) Hari-ja t<sup>h</sup>aŋ-baj na?  
Hari-NOM go-PST QP  
Has Hari gone?

(xii) nuŋ Guwahati-aw tha-uu na?  
you Guwhati-LOC to live-HAB QP  
are you live in Guwahati?

The particle 'na' occurs in the final position of the sentences and forms the question sentences. If it is occurred in the final position it is denoted the yes/no question and want to know the clarification. Whereas, the QP is also use to tag question. For examples-

(xiii) bi-uu sase muzaŋ mansi  
he-NOM one good man  
nonga na?  
not QP  
He is a good man, isn't he?

**'nama'** : 'nama' is another question particle of the Bodo language. It is used in the case of yes/no. The particle is occurring in the initial and final position of the sentences to form the question sentences. For examples-

**A. Initial position:**

Generally the QP is use when the speaker has some idea about the answer of the questions. For examples-

(xiv) dabu munthi-a nama nuŋ?  
still know-NEG QP you

- Don't you know still?  
 (xv) gasui-buu nama ada?  
 entire-SUF QP eldet brother  
 Is entire bother?

In the above examples (xiv) and (xv) the QP 'nama' occurs in the initial position of the sentence and form the question sentences.

### B. Final position:

The QP is also occurring in the final position of the sentences. For examples-

- (xvi) be komla-a gazri nama?  
 this orange-NOM bed QP  
 is this orange bed?  
 (xvii) nuŋ uŋkham za-guŋ nama?  
 you rice eat-FUT QP  
 Will you eat rice?

Now it is important to note that the particles 'da', 'na' and 'nama' can used in the same position of a sentence, basically in the final position. For examples-

- (xviii) Hari-a Guwahati-au thaŋ-baj da/na/nama?  
 Hari-NOM Guwahati-LOC go-PST QP  
 Did Hari gone to Guwahati?  
 (xix) bi-uu bathra-khuu siman la-baj da/na/nama?  
 He-NOM sentence-ACC to confess-PST QP  
 has he confessed the sentence?

If analysis the particle 'da', 'na' and 'nama' of the above examples the particle 'da' 'na' and 'nama' are used in the same position. But the particles have slight different between each other. When the particles 'da' and 'na' are used than we feel that the sentences are smooth and honorific. Whereas, in case of QP 'nama' is used in the sentences than we could feel that the sentences have a little unsmooth and non honorific.

#### 1.1.4 Intonation

It is one kind of process to form the question sentences. In Bodo language, without using any question words, question suffixes and question particles can form a question sentence. This process of question formation is used some sort of rising intonation at the final words of the sentences. Basically it depends on the speaker and listener. For examples-

- (i) nuŋ uŋkham za-baj?  
 You rice eat-PST  
 did you eaten rice?  
 (ii) nuŋ raga zuŋ-duŋ?  
 you angry to be angry-Pr.CONT  
 Are you angry?

In the above examples (i) and (ii) neither used the question words nor question particles nor question suffixes; still the sentences are formed in interrogative sentences. Because these sentences use rising intonation at the final word. Here, it is to be noted that the examples could explain in two directions one is affirmative sentence and another is interrogative sentences. If the speakers are not use the rising intonation it is denote an affirmative sentence whereas the speakers are using the rising intonation at the final word of the sentences regarded as interrogative sentence.

## V CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed the structure and processes of question formation of Bodo language. From the above analysis we found that the questioning words can be indicated in different grammatical categories and the questioning words and question particles can keep in different position of the sentences. The particle 'da' 'na' and 'nama' are the question formative for yes/no question, whereas the particle 'da' and 'na' is also use to form the tag question. The study of question formation also found that the particle 'na' is represented the two functions at the same time; it is conjunction and question particle. To form the question sentences {-laj} and {-khu} are attached to the noun, pronoun and verbs, sometime the suffixes are following the question words. It is also found that the question sentences can form without the question words, particle and suffixes where the rising intonation is done the function as well.

**Abbreviations**

ACC	Accusative case	NOM	Nominative case
FUT	Future tense	PLs	Plural Suffix
GEN	Genitive case	Pr.CONT	Present continues
HAB	Habitual	PST	Past tense
HonF	Honorific form	QM	Question marker
IMPS	Imperative suffix	QP	Question particle
LOC	Locative Case	SUB	Sub-ordinating suffix
NEG	Negative	SUF	Suffix

**Symbols**

ŋ	velar voiced nasal
u	high-back unrounded vowel phoneme
j	palatal voiced semi-vowel

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