

# Passive and Ergative Constructions in Minangkabaunese: How are They Similar and Different?

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## ABSTRACT

The discussion on active and passive constructions is dominant in Minangkabaunese rather than those of ergative and antipassive ones. Further studies on grammatical typology of Minangkabaunese have found that there are types of grammatical constructions which are possibly assigned as the ergative constructions at syntactic level. However, the studies and discussion on ergative and antipassive constructions have not been becoming a main attention and focus of grammatical discussion yet. Most linguists and grammarians have not clearly identified and differentiated between passive and ergative constructions in Minangkabaunese. This is in serious question since ergative and passive are not exactly the same. This article, which is derived from a part of research results conducted in 2021, discusses the grammatical-typological features of ergatives and passives of Minangkabaunese focusing on how they are similar and different. Two main questions as the bases of data analysis and discussion are: (i) how are passive and ergative constructions grammatically constructed in Minangkabaunese?; and (ii) how are they similar and different? The data were analyzed and discussed based on the relevant grammatical-typological theories concerning with diathesis and voice systems cross-linguistically. The data presented were collected through the execution of a field research and supported by a library study. The data analysis confirms that passive and ergative constructions are not exactly the same and they are in certain grammatical-typological properties. These findings indicate that diathesis and/or voice systems in Minangkabaunese still need further analysis and discussion.

**Keywords:** *passive, ergative, grammatical typology, Minangkabaunese, diathesis, voice*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The studies on grammar of Minangkabaunese until the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, which were mostly based on structural linguistics, have been mostly assigned this local language as a nominative-accusative language at syntactic level. Consequently, the grammatical analyses and discussion on active and passive constructions are more dominant rather than those of ergative and antipassive ones. The previous linguists and researchers argue that active and passive opposition are relevant to discuss concerning with the grammar of Minangkabaunese. Moussay [1, 2], for instance, did a research and wrote a qualified description of Minangkabaunese grammar when he lived in West Sumatera. Moussay's work on the description of Minangkabaunese grammar can be assigned as a complete grammar of Minangkabaunese. However, the description of Minangkabaunese grammar does not relate to typological studies in which the typological analyses on diathesis and voice systems are possibly

included. Moussay and other previous researchers of Minangkabaunese grammar (see for example Ayub et.al. [3]; Nio et.al. [4]) discuss the active-passive constructions as the consequence of assigning Minangkabaunese as a nominative-accusative language.

When Jufrizal [5] firstly did a research on the grammatical-typology of Minangkabaunese grammar, he identified and claims, as well that Minangkabaunese has the grammatical constructions which can be categorized as the ergative construction. However, sufficient and complete discussion on ergative constructions in Minangkabaunese was not available in Jufrizal's research yet. Following the first study, Jufrizal et.al. (see [6], [7]) and Jufrizal (see [8], [9]) did further studies on grammatical-typology of Minangkabaunese. Based on the studies, it can be claimed that Minangkabaunese is a neutral language; a language which has both nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive language. As the result, Minangkabaunese has the grammatical constructions which can be categorized as active-passive constructions and ergative-

antipassive ones. The further studies on grammatical-typology of Minangkabaunese found that there are types of grammatical constructions which are possibly assigned as the ergative constructions at syntactic level, in addition to passive constructions. It means that Minangkabaunese may have grammatical properties as an ergative-absolutive language.

In grammatical-typology, a nominative-accusative language is a language which grammatically treat S and A in the same way, and different treatment is given to P ( $S = A, \neq P$ ). If a language grammatically treats S in same way with P, and different treatment is given to A ( $S = P, \neq$ ), then the language is called ergative-absolutive) (see [10]). Artawa and Jufrizal [10] also explain that in nominative-accusative language, active-passive dichotomy is the main voice system opposition where an active construction is treated as the underlying voice, meanwhile the passive construction is the derived one. In ergative-absolutive language in other side, the underlying-voice is an ergative construction, and the derived one is called antipassive construction. In case of Minangkabaunese has both properties of nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive, the studies on voice systems of a neutral language should be seriously studied, then. In other words, the voice system of active-passive and ergative-absolutive should be parts of grammatical studies on Minangkabaunese.

However, the studies and discussion on diathesis/voice ergative and antipassive have not been becoming a main attention and focus of grammatical discussion yet. Such condition can be understood that so far, most linguists and grammarians have not clearly indentified and differentiated between passive and ergative constructions in Minangkabaunese; they tend to grammatically treat passives and ergatives are the same. This treatment is in serious question since ergative and passive are not exactly the same in fact. Therefore, it is highly necessary to analyze and discuss the grammatical properties of passive and ergative constructions of Minangkabaunese.

If the studies on passives are common and easily found in many linguistic analyses of grammar of various languages, the studies on ergative constructions are rarely found, especially in Nusantara languages. The studies on ergativity are not easily applied to local languages in Indonesia due to the facts that there are a lot of complexity and various types of grammatical properties of the languages. Moreover, the studies of the ergativity in Austronesia languages are even more complex and complicated. In addition, the concept of ergative and passive even makes 'little' problems among linguists themselves.

A major unclarity and problem in current grammatical terminology, according to Comrie in

Shibatani (ed.) [11], surrounds the delimitation of passive and ergative, especially since many writers have been unclear and confusing about the criteria for considering a grammatical construction to be ergative or passive. In this regard, Comrie cites three criteria for distinguishing between the two phenomena, ergative and passive:

- (i) Passive and ergative constructions are similar in that they both entail assigning at least some subject qualities to the patient rather than the agent, though the passive's assignment is usually more extensive.
- (ii) The ergative differs from the passive in that the ergative often requires a higher integration of the agent phrase into the clause's syntax.
- (iii) The markedness of passive and ergative constructions differs - the passive is a marked construction, whilst the ergative is often unmarked;

Related to the criteria, it is important to note that passive and ergative are found in languages which are in neutral typology, the languages with both nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive properties. Then, it should be in sufficient understanding that passive and ergative come from different level of grammatical layers; passive is the derived construction in a nominative-accusative language (as the opposition of active as the underlying construction), meanwhile ergative is the underlying construction in an ergative-absolutive language (as the opposition of antipassive as the derived construction). The last point relates to the criteria that passive is a marked construction, but ergative is an unmarked construction. Thus, passive and ergative are not the same, even though they have similarities.

Diathesis not set in stone as an example of planning of semantic contentions onto syntactic capacities (linguistic relations). Corresponding to this, the idea of diathesis is firmly identified with that of verbal valency/valence which is innately connected with the arrangement of contentions administered by the action word being referred to. Kulikov (in [12]) adds further that the classification of not really set in stone based on the idea of diathesis as follows: voice is ordinary encoding of diathesis through verbal morphology. Hence, numerous dialects of the world encode the previously mentioned uninvolved diathesis through an exceptional verbal morpheme, which appropriately is deciphered as the marker of the aloof voice. Therefore, diathesis and voice are not exactly the same, but they are in close semantic-grammatical relations that can be seen in grammatical constructions; voice actually is the

formal representation (regular encoding) of diathesis through verbal morphology of certain languages.

As the basis for more theoretical foundation, it is all right to notice what Shibatani (in [11]:3) says about voice. Voice, he claims, is a system that chooses a grammatically prominent syntactic constituent – the subject – from a clause's underlying semantic functions (case or thematic roles). A simple voice technique is available in the majority of languages. The essential technique in accusative languages is to choose an actor as a subject, and the active voice refers to the form that results from that choice. Thus, active is the unmarked, the underlying, voice in nominative-accusative languages, while the opposition voice, passive, is the marked or the derived one. The standard active-passive opposition has a semantic difference in that the subject acts on or affects others in the active form, whereas the subject is impacted or receives some effect in the passive form. The antagonism between the active voice and the middle voice in classical languages like Greek and Sanskrit is based on this meaning distinction. In that it expresses a situation in which the subject is influenced, the middle voice is akin to the passive voice, which is a later development in Indo-European languages. (see also [13]; [14]; [15]; and [16]).

In the case that the active-passive opposition is regarded as the basic voice system in nominative-accusative languages (where  $S=A, \neq P$ ) at syntactic level, in which active voice is the underlying construction and the passive is the derived one, the study on passive need clear-linguistic criteria and parameters cross-linguistically. In this sense, the analysis and discussion should be based on typological criteria of passive as the derived construction. Then, the ergative is the underlying construction in ergative-absolutive languages (in which  $S=P, \neq A$ ) as opposed to antipassive construction. Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to the criteria of ergative and antipassive constructions cross-linguistically.

Let's see first the grammatical processes of deriving active into passive as simply mentioned by Tallerman ([17]). Accordingly, the passive construction:

- (i) applies to a transitive clause (the active clause) and forms an intransitive clause;
- (ii) object promoted to subject ( $O > S$ );
- (iii) former subject demoted to oblique argument ( $S > Obl$ ) or is deleted;
- (iv) changes occur in the morphology (=form) of the verb to signal passivization; (see also [18] for the same idea of passive);

Supporting Comrie's idea concerned with the similarity and difference between passive and ergative

as mentioned above (see [11]), it is essential to pay serious attention to Dixon's idea [18:1] about ergative and/or ergativity. Then, the criteria and concept ergative constructions as simply argued by Comrie [11] and Dixon [18] are used to analyze the data. These are possibly used since the grammatical constructions to be analyzed relates to voice system of human languages cross-linguistically. Other arguments and concepts of diathesis and/or voice system in linguistic typology are also referred to in order to have better result of analysis.

It is also necessary to know that in earlier studies on and some descriptions of Indonesian-type languages, the voice system is generally assumed to have an active-passive alternation (see Chen and McDonnell [16]. Consequently, the active- passive voice are dominantly discussed and almost all grammatical constructions bahasa Indonesia, including in Minangkabau, are treated as the active and passive construction. The analysis and discussion on ergative and antipassive constructions were almost neglected. Some linguists even claim that ergative and passive are the same, and others say that an ergative is also an active one. The following data are simply assigned as active and/or passive of Minangkabau.

- (1) *Surek ba- tulih malam tu juo.*  
letter PRE-write night that also  
'The letter was written at that night'
- (2) *Urang kampung ba- buru ciliang.*  
people kampong PRE-hunt pig  
'Villagers hunted pigs'

Data (1) is mostly assigned as a passive construction, and (2) as an active one. This claim is problematic and still in question because the two data need ergative analysis rather than accusative analysis.

For valid and reliable analysis, Minangkabau should be 'placed' as a right grammatical typology. In facts, however, the typological studies on grammatical construction of Minangkabau (see [5], [6], [7], [8], [9], [10]) prove that this local language has grammatical constructions which have grammatical properties as the ergative constructions. In accordance with this, the idea of this paper, to see the similarity and difference of ergative and passive, may contribute to further-detailed data and information of grammatical features of Minangkabau.

This article, which is derived from and developed based on a part of research results conducted in 2021, analyzes and discusses the ergative and passive properties with the focus on the typological similarities and differences of the constructions in Minangkabau. Two main questions as the bases for data analysis and discussion are: (i) *how are passive and ergative*

*constructions grammatically constructed in Minangkabaunese?;* and (ii) *how are they similar and different?* The data analysis and discussion are based on the relevant grammatical-typological theories concerning with diathesis and voice systems cross-linguistically. The data analysis and discussion presented in this paper may give another way of grammatical analysis of Minangkabaunese based on the relevant theories of grammatical typology.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study was conducted by means of descriptive-qualitative research in the form of a field research and supported by a library study conducted in 2021. This research was carried out as a field study in West Sumatera, where native Minangkabaunese speakers initially reside. The information in this work was presented in the form of clauses classified as formal-grammatical constructs, specifically standard ones. In practice, data were gathered via observing participants, conducting in-depth interviews, administering questionnaires, and quoting information from pertinent written documents. Field notes, observation sheets, recorders, an interview guide, and questionnaire sheets were among the tools used. The sources of data were the native speakers of Minangkabaunese, intentionally selected as the informants and respondents, and the manuscripts (news papers, magazines, and letters) written in Minangkabaunese. In addition, since the researchers are also the native speakers of Minangkabaunese, they were also possible as the sources of data, but all intuitive data were systematically cross-checked and consulted to the selected informants for having the validity and reliability of the data. The data obtained then were classified into clausal-syntactical. The data were linguistically examined using grammatical typology's applicable theories and rules of passive and ergative constructions. The findings of the study are presented in both formal and informal forms, as is customary in language research.

## 3. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data presented in this part are those collected in the field research and library study conducted in 2021. The main analysis and discussion are based on theories of grammatical typology, particularly those concerned with concepts and principles of passive and ergative constructions. In order to have clear and understandable description and explanation, this part is divided into three sub-parts, namely: passive constructions in Minangkabaunese, ergative constructions in Minangkabaunese, and similarity and difference of

passive and ergative in Minangkabaunese. Each sub-parts correlates to the others so that this part has oneness as a whole.

### 3.1 Passive Construction in Minangkabaunese

The grammatical construction in passive voice (hence called passive) in Minangkabaunese is resulted from a syntactical process called passivization. Passivization in Minangkabaunese follows the universal passivization as mentioned by Tallerman [17] and Dixon [18] above. Thus, the passive in this local language can be categorized as general-universal passives. The criteria and processes of passive in Minangkabaunese can be grammatically traced and typologically identified based on the universal passives possessed by nominative-accusative languages. Let's firstly pay serious attention to the following data!

- (3) a. *Urang kampung mam-buek aturan baru.*  
people kampung ACT-make rules new  
'Villagers made new rules'
- b. *Aturan baru di- buek dek urang kampung.*  
rules new PAS-make by people kampung  
'The new rules were made by villagers'
- (4) a. *Anak mudo man- cari batu akik.*  
youths ACT-look for stone agate  
'Youths looking for agate stone'
- b. *Batu akik di- cari dek anak mudo.*  
stone agate PAS-look for by youths  
'Stone agate is being looked for by youths'
- (5) a. *Uda ma- milih sangkak buruang.*  
elder brother ACT-choose cage bird  
'Elder brother chose a bird cage'
- b. *Sangkak buruang di- pilih dek uda.*  
cage bird PAS-choose by elder brother  
'A cage bird was chosen by elder brother'

The data (3) – (5) above are pairs of active and passive in Minangkabaunese (where (a) is active and (b) is passive). As it has been mentioned above, active and passive voice are found in nominative-accusative languages; the active voice is the underlying construction and passive is the derived one. In (3a), *urang kampung* 'villagers' is the grammatical subject of the underlying active voice and *aturan baru* 'new rules' is the grammatical object. The transitive clause follows passivization in which the object *aturan baru* promotes to subject position of the derived intransitive form as the passive construction in (3b). In the

passivization, active prefix *maN-* in verbal predicate changes to passive prefix *di-*, and the grammatical subject of former-basic construction (the active voice), *urang kampuang* demotes to oblique relation or it can be deleted. The syntactic process, passivization, coincides with the universal passivization cross-linguistically. The grammatical subject of each passive construction is 'pure' patient; it is an undergoer grammatical construction. Moreover, all passives are derived intransitive construction because the agents are demoted to non-core argument (oblique relation) or they can be deleted. Based on these characteristics, it is proved that Minangkabaunese belongs to nominative-accusative language at syntactic level. Then, the same explanation can be addressed to pair of active-passive in data (4a,b) and (5a,b).

The passives of Minangkabaunese identified by universal passivization and morphologically marked by passive verbal-prefix *di-* as presented above can be claimed as general-volitional passives. It means, that is the type of universal passives with the meaning of volition semantically. In addition to this, there is also one type of passive with the non-volitional meaning; passive with the meaning of non-volition semantically. This type of passive is still follows the universal passivization, but it uses verbal-passive prefix *ta-* instead of *di-*. This type of passive is unique since it has semantic meaning that can be related to the sense of less 'attempt' or out of volitional action of speaker as the agent. The following data are the examples of such non-volitional passive in Minangkabaunese.

- (6) a. *Ambo mam- bali lauak lusuah patang.*  
 PRO1SG ACT- buy fish un-fresh yesterday  
 'I bought un-fresh fish yesterday'
- b. *Lauak lusuah ta-bali dek ambo patang.*  
 fish un-fresh PAS-buy by me yesterday  
 'The un-fresh fish was (un-volitionally) bought by me yesterday'
- (7) a. *Banyak urang ma- narimo kaba duto tu.*  
 many people ACT-accept news hoax ART  
 'Many people accepted the hoax news'
- b. *Kaba duto tu ta- tarimo dek banyak urang.*  
 news hoax ART PAS-accept by many people  
 'The hoax news has been (un-volitionally) accepted by many people'
- (8) a. *Anak-anak ma- niru karajo indak elok.*  
 children ACT-imitate works no good  
 'The children imitate no good work'

- b. *Karajo indak elok ta- tiru dek anak-anak.*  
 works no good PAS-imitate by children  
 'The no good works are (un-volitionally) imitated by children'

The grammatical-typological features and semantic properties of non-volitional passive morphologically marked by prefix *ta-* are the same with those of volitional passives as showed in (3b) – (5b), except in the degree of volitionality. The passives in Minangkabaunese such as in (6b) – (8b) are semantically less or lack of volitionality initiated by the agents (or speakers). Therefore, general-universal passives in Minangkabaunese are grammatically constructed based on universal passivization and it can be divided into two types of passive, volitional and non-volitional passive.

Based on data and typological analysis, passive constructions in Minangkabaunese have the following characteristics:

- (i) The passives in Minangkabaunese are grammatically resulted from the syntactic process which is called passivization;
- (ii) All passives in Minangkabaunese are the derived-intransitive constructions, they are not the underlying constructions;
- (iii) The grammatical subject of a passive in Minangkabaunese is patient;
- (iv) There are semantically two types of passive in Minangkabaunese, volitional and non-volitional passive;
- (v) Volitional passive in Minangkabaunese is morphologically marked by verbal-prefix *di-* and non-volitional one is morphologically marked by verbal-prefix *ta-*;

It is normal to have such kind of passive characteristics if Minangkabaunese is treated as a nominative-accusative language. For many linguists, particularly dialectologists, the cross-linguistic passivization may be summarized from various grammatical properties of passives and their related semantic meanings. That Minangkabaunese may differ two types of passives is also natural because it was frequently found that many languages have types of passive constructions. In English, for instance, there are *canonical passive with to be + -en and get passive*. In *Tukang Besi*, as reported by Donohue [19], passives are morphologically marked by prefix *to-* and *te-*. Passive with prefix *to-* is general passive which is also called subject-demoting passive. Meanwhile passive with prefix *te-* is an accidental passive, similar to passive with *ta-* in Minangkabaunese.

### 3.2 Ergative Construction in Minangkabaunese

Talking about passive means talking about derived and marked construction in nominative-accusative languages. The underlying construction in this type of languages is active. Ergative construction (hence called ergative), in other side, is the underlying grammatical construction in ergative-absolutive languages. The derived construction in this type of language is antipassive. In relation to this, the discussion about active and passive in Minangkabaunese is common because so far this local language is mostly treated as a nominative-accusative language. Then, is there ergative construction in Minangkabaunese? Based on recent-previous researches on grammatical typology (see [6], [7], [8], [9], and [10]), Minangkabaunese has grammatical construction having ergative properties. Please firstly pay attention to the followings!

- (9) a. *Tukang tuo ma- nagak- an kudo-kudo.*  
carpenter old ACT-build up-CAU roof-frame  
'The chair carpenter built up the roof frame'
- b. *Kudo-kudo di- tagak- an dek tukang tuo.*  
roof-frame PAS-build up-CAU by carpenter old  
'The roof-frame was built up by the chair carpenter'
- c. *Kudo-kudo ba- tagak- an dek tukang tuo.*  
roof-frame ERG-build up-CAU by carpenter old  
'The roof-frame was built up by chair carpenter'
- (10) a. *Panitia man-dabiah jawi di laman musajik.*  
committee ACT-slaughter cows in yard mosque.  
'The committee slaughtered the cows in mosque yard'
- b. *Jawi di- dabiah dek panitia di laman musajik.*  
cows PAS-slaughter by ommitte in yard mosque  
'The cows were slaughtered by the committee in mosque yard'
- c. *Jawi ba- dabiah dek panitia di laman musajik.*  
Cows ERG-slaughter by committee in yard mosque

'The cows were slaughtered by the committee in mosque yard'

In the data above, the actives are as in (9a) and (10a) and passives are as in (9b) and (10b). Data (9c) and (10c) are in the same grammatical construction with (9b) and (10b), except the verbal-morphological marker is prefix *ba-*. The grammatical construction morphologically marked with *ba-* in Minangkabaunese seems to have similar grammatical-semantic properties with passive; it can be said as passive-like construction. However, further grammatical typological analysis on such construction proves that they are not exactly the same. The grammatical subjects in (9a) and (10a) are agent; they are the active voice. In (9b) and (10b), the grammatical subjects are "totally" patient; they are the passive voice. Even though the grammatical subjects in (9c) and (10c) look like patient, but the "degree" of their patientness are not as high as that in (9b) and (10b). Such grammatical-semantic properties lead to indicate that (9c) and (10c) cannot be assigned as passives or actives, in fact. Referring back to Comrie's in Shibatani (ed.) [11] and Dixon's [18] (and see also [10], [16]) these constructions are reasonable to assign as ergative constructions,

It is right to claim that the grammatical subjects in (9c) and (10c) are patient, but they have different patient properties compared to passives as in (9b) and (10b). The degree of patientness in passive is higher than that of ergative, as reflected by (9c) and (10c). Then, it is also quite difficult to state that (9c) and (10c) are grammatically derived from the active voice (9a) and (10a). It may be strongly claim that the ergative construction (as 9c and 10c) is one of underlying grammatical construction which is originally possessed by Minangkabaunese. In addition, the ergative typically involves greater integration of the agent phrase into the syntax of the clause. Then it can be also stated that passive voice in Minangkabaunese, as in other languages, as well, is marked construction. However, the ergative constructions as in (9c) and (10c) can be assigned as the unmarked constructions. This claim is supported by the fact that they are more natural and commonly used in unlimited language uses (see also Croft [20] and Dixon [21]).

In relation to this identification, it is argued that the ergative in Minangkabaunese is morphologically marked by prefix *ba-*. It is also reasonable to state that the grammatical-typological function of prefix *di-* and *ta-* are different from that of prefix *ba-*. The claim stating that the grammatical construction morphologically marked by verbal-prefix *di-* and *ta-* in Minangkabaunese is linguistically accepted. But, the grammatical constructions morphologically marked by

prefix *ba-* belong to passive and/or active is not reasonable claim.

As Minangkabaunese has both active-passive and ergative construction, it is right to claim that this local language belongs to neutral language with specific typological characteristics. Theoretically, if one language has ergative as the underlying construction, then it should have the derived construction which is called antipassive. But, the phenomena of antipassive construction in Minangkabaunese are not discussed in this paper. For more data and understanding, the followings are assigned as the ergative constructions in Minangkabaunese.

- (11) *Surek ba- kirim dari kampong.*  
letter ERG-send from kampong  
'The letter was sent from kampong'
- (12) *Kasalahan-nyo ba- etong ciek-ciek.*  
fouls- POS3TG ERG-count one-one  
His fouls were counted one by one'
- (13) *Jawi ba- kabek-an dek abak dakek sumua.*  
cow ERG tie- CAU by father near well  
'The cow was tied by father near the well.'
- (14) *Nasi ba- bungkuih rancak-rancak dari rumah.*  
rice ERG-pack well from house  
'The rice was packed well from house'

### 3.3 Passive and Ergative in Minangkabaunese: Similarity and Difference

In general view, passive and ergative are alike; the data of Minangkabaunese prove it. The typological dichotomy of syntactic constructions of human languages may come to grouping S (subject), A (agent), and P/O (patient or object) as nominative-accusative system ( $S = A, \neq P$ ) and ergative-absolutive ( $S = P, \neq A$ ). Typologists believe that no single language belongs to absolute (pure) nominative-accusative or ergative-absolutive language. The label given to a language as a nominative-accusative or an ergative-absolutive language is more on tendency rather than absolute values. As the result, most languages in the world have the grammatical properties as mixed typology. The name given to some languages as an active, a split-S and fluid-S, or a neutral language indicate that inside the two opposite typology, there are still other system of language typology found in human languages (see [10], [18], [21]).

As it has been discussed above, Minangkabaunese has grammatical properties as a nominative-accusative and an ergative-absolutive language. That is why Minangkabaunese can be assigned as a neutral language

at syntactic level. It means Minangkabaunese is not a "pure" nominative-accusative or ergative-absolutive language. In relation to this, Minangkabaunese has active-passive constructions and ergative-absolutive ones. In the surface structure, passives and ergatives in Minangkabaunese are alike, but they are not exactly the same; they have similarities and differences in senses of grammatical-typological views.

Based on the data analysis, there are, at least, three similarities of passive and ergative construction in Minangkabaunese. Firstly, the grammatical subject of passive and ergative is patient (P). This is one of reasons argued by some linguists to say that passive and ergative are the same. If determining passive and ergative is only based on surface semantic role of grammatical subject, passive and ergative are not different, then. This is also the case which leads linguists to have particular and specific analyses in order to find the differences between passive and ergative.

Secondly, both passive and ergative in Minangkabaunese are grammatically constructed in the same ways. The surface structure of passive and passive is highly similar, if we may not say they are identical pair. Some linguists and students in linguistics may reveal that passive is also ergative; they are not different, except in morphological marker. If there is no obvious semantic attention given to verbal prefix used (*di-*, *ta-* for passive; and *ba-* for ergative), then passive and ergative are not different.

Thirdly, both passive and ergative construction in Minangkabaunese constitute patient focus instead of agent-focus. Pragmatically in broad sense, the use of passive and ergative bring about polite meanings and one of language politeness strategy. The speakers of Minangkabaunese may choose passive or ergative construction in order to have politeness in verbal communication in various speech events. Even though this similarity is more on broad sense of linguistic meanings, but it is also necessary to explore in this sense how passive and ergative are similar.

In other side, passive and ergative constructions in Minangkabaunese are different. It is not on right argument to state that passive and ergative are the same. Based on data analysis and discussion presented above, it may be argued that, at least, there are four differences between passive and ergative, including in Minangkabaunese. Firstly, even though a grammatical subject in passive and ergative is semantically patient, but the degree of patientness is different. The grammatical subject in passive is absolutely patient, "pure" patient. But, it is not an absolute patient in ergative construction. The grammatical subject in ergative construction is "less" patient, but it has lack of agent role. To differentiate the degree of patientness in

passive and ergative, it is essential to explore and to identify the grammatical relations and semantic roles exist in the two different constructions.

Secondly, passive is a derived construction in a nominative-accusative language. Passive is always opposite to active as the underlying construction with certain grammatical properties in human languages cross-linguistically. In other side, ergative is the underlying construction in an ergative-absolutive language. The opposition of ergative in this type of languages is antipassive. Once passive construction is being talked about, it is the place to talk about derived one. Meanwhile, at the time ergative is being talked about, we are talking about underlying construction. Therefore, passive and ergative are different in the level of grammatical construction.

Thirdly, as it can be seen in the data of Minangkabau above, the agent (marked by preposition *dek* 'by') of ergative involves greater integration into the syntax of clause. The agent argument is highly integrated to the clause as the whole because it has grammatical relation and semantic role to the core-argument of the clause. It is different from the agent in passive (also marked by preposition *dek* 'by'). In passive, agent is demoted to non-core argument or it becomes an oblique, or it is freely deleted.

Fourthly, passive and ergative differ in terms of markedness, the values determined by asymmetrical and unequal construction in counterpart. In this case, the passive is a marked construction, the construction which has non-basic values and used in limited contexts. Whereas, the ergative is typically an unmarked construction; ergative is more basic and natural than antipassive in ergative-absolutive language. Therefore, passive and ergative are different in nature, including in Minangkabau.

#### 4. CONCLUDING REMARK

The grammatical studies on Minangkabau need serious attention and critical exploration in order to have valid and reliable findings and conclusion. If passive is in common and frequent discussion in grammatical studies of Minangkabau, but it is not as such on ergative. Ergative does not have sufficient attention to be analyzed and discussed by linguists since to treat this language as a nominative-accusative language has not been argumentatively questioned until the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century. To assign Minangkabau as a normal nominative-accusative language might lead linguists forgot to see ergativity as another way of grammatical analyses toward Minangkabau. Exploring grammatical properties of Minangkabau by means of typological analyses is one way to achieve the ideal goals. The data analysis and discussion presented in this

paper confirm that passive and ergative constructions are not exactly the same, although they have distinct similarities and differences in grammatical-typological properties. These findings indicate that diathesis and/or voice systems in Minangkabau still need further analysis and discussion, based on relevant theories and approaches. Further analyses on grammatical properties of Minangkabau are highly being waited.

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