

Two Nasal Prefixes in Kerinci
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There is considerable phonological variation in the realization of the nasal ‘active’ prefix within Malayic. In a very general sense, varieties can be categorized as having ‘syllabic’ vs. ‘segmental’ nasal prefix forms. In varieties with a syllabic nasal prefix, allomorphs of the prefix contain a syllable nucleus (e.g. *məN-* in Standard Malay and Indonesian, and *ma(N)-* in some varieties of Minangkabau). In varieties with a segmental nasal prefix, allomorphs of the nasal prefix surface as a single segment in most environments (e.g. *N-* in many of the local Malay varieties of South Sumatra and Jambi). There are also ‘double form’ varieties, such as Padang Minangkabau (Crouch, 2009) and Jakarta Indonesian (Wouk, 1989 *inter alia*), in which syllabic and segmental forms of the prefix are both possible, and may occur in apparent free variation, as in (1). In these varieties, the syllabic and segmental forms of the nasal prefix are in fact cognate forms belonging to distinct registers (in both Padang Minangkabau and Jakarta Indonesian the syllabic form belongs to the acrolect).

- (1) Minangkabau (Crouch, 2009: 122)
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|--|--|
| a. <i>sia</i> <i>m-bue??</i>
who AV.make
‘Who made it?’ | b. <i>sia</i> <i>mam-bue??</i>
who AV.make
‘Who made it?’ |
|--|--|

This paper focuses on the properties of the nasal prefix in Pondok Tinggi (PT), a dialect of Kerinci. PT exhibits a syllabic nasal prefix *maN-* and a segmental nasal prefix *N-*. Interestingly, unlike other double form varieties, the choice between syllabic and segmental forms is determined by grammatical factors, not sociolinguistic register. For example, in a transitive clause, the verb *cilo?* ‘steal’, occurs with the segmental nasal prefix *N-* (2a), but not the syllabic prefix *maN-* (2b).

- (2) Pondok Tinggi: Transitive active clause
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|--|---|
| a. <i>no</i> <i>nilo?</i> <i>əmaeh</i>
3 AV-steal.O gold.A
‘He stole gold’ | b. * <i>no</i> <i>man-cilo?</i> <i>əmaeh</i>
3 AV-steal.O gold.A
‘He stole gold’ |
|--|---|

In other environments, however, only the syllabic form of the nasal prefix is permitted. For example, when *cilao?* occurs as a nominalized subject, as in (3), only the syllabic form of the prefix is permitted.

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|--|---|
| (3)a <i>man-cilao?</i> <i>itoh</i> <i>idua?</i> <i>baoi?</i>
AV.steal.A TOP NEG good.A
‘Stealing is not good’ | b. * <i>nilao?</i> <i>itoh</i> <i>idua?</i> <i>baoi?</i>
AV.steal.A TOP NEG good.A
‘Stealing is not good’ |
|--|---|

Similarly, in intransitive imperative constructions, like those in (4), only the syllabic form of the prefix is judged grammatical.

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|---|--|
| (4)a <i>man-cilao?</i> <i>lah</i> <i>ikao</i>
AV.steal.A PART 2
‘Go steal!’ | b. * <i>nilao?</i> <i>lah</i> <i>ikao</i>
AV.steal.A PART 2
‘Go steal!’ |
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In this paper we compare the distribution of the syllabic and segmental allomorphs of the nasal prefix in PT in several constructions. We argue that the choice between these allomorphs is conditioned by argument structure.

References:

Crouch, S. E. 2009. *Voice and verb morphology in Minangkabau, a language of West Sumatra, Indonesia*. The University of Western Australia. Master thesis.

Wouk, F. 1989. *The impact of discourse on grammar: Verb morphology in spoken Jakarta Indonesian*. University of California, Los Angeles. PhD dissertation.