

**A GRAMMAR OF INTERROGATIVES IN TONGA**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION**

I, Habeenzu Haamilandu, do hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work; and that to the best of my knowledge, has not been previously presented for a degree at this or any other institution of higher learning in the world.

**Signature**.....**Date** .....

This dissertation has been submitted for examination with the approval of my academic supervisor.

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## APPROVAL

This dissertation of Habeenzu Haamilandu is approved as fulfilling the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Linguistic Science of the University of Zambia.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my late parents: Mr. Isaac Mweetwa Haamilandu and Mrs. Joyce Sifwa Haamilandu.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

My sincere gratitude and appreciation goes to my academic supervisor Dr. Hambaba Jimaima for his scholarly contribution during the production of this work.

My special thanks goes to my family: my dear wife Elizabeth and my lovely daughters, Lumba and Lushomo. I deeply appreciate your support by enduring long hours of absence during the entire period of this study. May God bless you and I love you all.

Above all, I am grateful to God for making it possible for me to complete this work by giving me good health, and strength throughout my study.

## ABSTRACT

This study examined interrogatives in Tonga. In particular, the current study undertook to understand the phonological aspects of interrogative markers, morphological aspects, and their syntactic distributions as well as the role that semantics plays in interrogative constructions within the broader context of the Tonga grammar. The Basic Linguistic Theory is used as a theoretical framework. The Tonga language under scrutiny in this study is a language spoken by a Bantu group of people found mainly in Zambia and some parts of Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The variety of Tonga considered in this study is the plateau Tonga as particularly spoken in Choma district of the southern province of Zambia. The researcher identified the key informants for the study who are teachers of the language in secondary schools and subjected them to word and sentence list which they provided data accordingly by transforming declarative sentences into interrogatives in Tonga. The data from the study show that there are three types of interrogatives that exist in Tonga, and these are: polar interrogative, alternative interrogative and constituent interrogatives. With regards to interrogative particles in Tonga, Polar interrogatives use *hena*, *tee*, *na* and tonal particles while Constituent interrogatives use *Buti*, *(Ku)li*, *(Mu)li*, *(Aa)li*, *Cili*, *Lili*, *Nkaambo nzi/ kai/nzi*, *Ni*, *Nzi* and the alternative interrogatives in Tonga engage the following disjunctive particles in their formation: *Naanka*, *Na* and *Na pe*. Interrogative particles in Tonga assume different forms; they are either free or bound morphemes. Syntactically, all the interrogative particles in Tonga occur in-situ except for *kuli* ‘where’, *kai* ‘why’ and *nkaambo nzi* ‘why’ that occupy the initial position only. The coordinating conjunction ‘*naanka*’ is positioned between two polar interrogatives reduced to one, by ellipsis to form the alternative interrogative. In answering polar interrogatives in Tonga, the data revealed that, an addressee may answer with *inzya* to mean yes or *peepe* to mean no when responding to positive polar interrogatives accompanied with culturally appropriate gestures of head nodding. In answering constituent interrogatives in Tonga, a full clause that contains the constituent that fill the information gap the interrogative words seek to link is used or a simple word made up of the constituent being questioned is used.

Interrogatives can be studied from different perspectives. The study recommends further studies on constituent interrogatives in Tonga using other theories such as the minimalist program and also to conduct an exhaustive examination of the phonology of the interrogatives in Tonga.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

The following abbreviations shall be used in the glosses to explain the parts of speech used in the illustrations to be given in this study.

1SG - *first person singular*

2SG - *second person singular*

PRES - *present tense*

PST - *past tense*

REL - *relative tense*

APPL - *applicative*

PROPNAME - *proper name*

CL - *noun class*

POSS - *possessive pronoun*

RPRN - *relative pronoun*

DEM- *Demonstrative*

COP - *copula*

LOC - *locative*

SC - *subject concord*

OC - *object concord*

QP - *question particle*

INTW – *Interrogative word*

INTP – *Interrogative Phrase*

DP – *Disjunctive Particle*

PASS - *passive*

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces a study on a *Grammar of Interrogatives in Tonga*. The motivation for this study was driven by the desire to discover the interrogative types in Tonga. As such, the study undertook to understand the phonological aspects of interrogative markers; some aspects of morphology, and their syntactic distributions, as well as the manifestation of semantics in interrogative constructions within the broader context of the Tonga grammar. Being mindful of the various aspects of the grammar and context and the extent to which such aspects of language come to bear on understanding interrogative constructions generally and in Tonga in particular, the chapter begins with some background information on sentence types that culminates in the interrogative sentence, which is the focus of the study. A brief background information of the language under investigation is given followed by the problem statement and the aim of the study. The remaining sub-sections of the chapter cover the objectives, research questions and the significance of the study.

#### 1.1. The Tonga Language

The variety of Tonga being investigated in this study is the plateau Tonga as particularly spoken in Choma district of the Southern Province of Zambia. According to the classification of the Bantu Languages by Guthrie (1970), Tonga is placed in M64 where M stands for the zone, 60 for the group, the Tonga cluster and 4 for the language. It is one of the more than 450 languages belonging to the Bantu group of African languages (Shillington, 1995). Tonga is spoken mainly in the southern part of Zambia and some parts of Zimbabwe and Mozambique. There are four known dialects of Tonga and these include Lenje, Ila, Tokaleya and We, which have their own classifications (Nkolola 1997). Tonga like other Bantu languages is a tone language that uses changes in fundamental frequency to indicate lexical and grammatical meaning. Syntactically, Tonga generally exhibits an SVO basic word order. According to Shilington (1995:49), 'Bantu' is a term used by modern linguists to refer to "a particular family of African languages belonging to the wider Niger-Congo group" and this group stretches across sub-Saharan Africa.

The word Bantu is basically a term founded on the reconstructed Proto-Bantu term for people or humans. The coinage was conceived of from the apparent unique values that this language group possesses. The word is reconstructed from the bilabial plural noun class (class 2) prefix *ba-* and the noun stem *-ntu* which is the root of the word, a phenomenon which occurs in all Bantu languages. The geographical origin of this language group can be traced from the West/Central Africa, particularly in the modern day Cameroon. Philip, A and Randall (2007:169) estimate that in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC, a rapid succession of migration allowed the movement across the Congo basin towards East Africa, and another in a southward wave. Tichkoff et al. (2009) observe that a genetic analysis reveals that there is a significant cluster of Bantu people by region, suggesting a formation of a separate ancestral cluster between the Eastern and Southern Bantu languages. This can probably be as a result of admixture with the local population that the migrant Bantu people found during their wave of migration. The southward migrants in which the Tonga belongs are claimed to have reached the Savannah by 500 BC (Newman, 1995; Ehret, 1998; Shillington, 2005), the approximate location of the modern day Zambia where the Tonga language under investigation is mainly spoken.

In the Zambian geo-political context, Tonga is considered as one of the seven major languages promulgated for use in schools and limited government functions for communication of policy in multimedia communication such as radio, television and print media (cf. Jimaima 2016; Simwinga 2006). Within the broader context of governmentality, Tonga was selected as a regional official language designated for use in the Southern Province of Zambia (MOE 1977). In addition, it is used as a medium of instruction from Grade 1 to Grade 4 in schools situated in the Southern Province and rural parts of Central Province. According to the linguistic zoning, it covers areas such as Mazabuka, Monze, Choma, Kalomo, Namwala, Gwembe, Sinazongwe, Pemba, Zimba and parts of Livingstone which is also partly covered by Lozi, a language mainly spoken in the Western province of the country (cf. Nkolola 1997; Hang'ombe 2015).

In terms of the dialectological nature and distribution, Tonga has many varieties (cf. Sibajene 2013). Two are identified for this study; the Valley Tonga and Plateau Tonga. The two varieties are separated by the geographical space that the speakers of these varieties occupy. The plateau lies between the two south central Africa's great rivers, the Zambezi and the Kafue. For many centuries, the Bantu people speaking the plateau variety of the Tonga language have lived on and around the plateau (Araki, 2001). This area covers places such as Choma, Kalomo, Monze, Pemba and Mazabuka. The Valley variety of the Tonga language identifies itself in areas that

are along the valley of the Zambezi River and its surrounding places like Siavonga, Gwembe and Sinazongwe.

## **1.2. Background: contextualising the study**

This section in particular, provides an overview of the situatedness of interrogatives in the broader scope of sentence types. To achieve this, it is necessary to explore the different types of sentences that obtain in language in general. However, a thorough review of the types of interrogatives is provided in chapter Two. To begin with, in order to appreciate the workings of interrogatives in Tonga, it is important to provide the types of sentences on which interrogatives are formed. Three types of simple sentences exist across all the languages of the world and when one is writing or speaking, they make use of either of these types to say what they want to say. With every utterance, there is an illocutionary force that makes the listeners to perform a certain action, in accordance with the speaker's intentions. The action induced by such intentions, or speech acts, are systematically related to particular types of sentence form uttered by the speaker (Levelt, 1989). Each, with its own specific purpose, the sentence types include: declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory.

However, according to Konig and Siemund (2007), declarative, interrogative and imperative are the main sentence types and this is because exclamatory sentences are just like the declarative sentences in that they share declaration, the only variation is that exclamatory sentences are said with emotion. Declaratives are used in asserting, claiming, stating, accusing, criticizing, promising and guaranteeing or basically to give information while imperatives are mainly used when delivering commands for the addressee to do something such as react to orders, requests, suggestions, and appeal. Interrogatives, which are the focus of this undertaking, are types of sentences which are used primarily for eliciting information, and asking questions from the hearers. According to Kim (2003), interrogatives are not only limited to eliciting information, but also achieve speech acts indirectly, including rejection, refutation, and reproach. It is therefore important to establish how this is achieved in Tonga. Particularly, providing a detailed understanding on the morphological forms that interrogatives in Tonga take when eliciting information. And no less important, their syntactic distribution and phonological patterns.

The acquisition of information is very important to the human species, and this process can be achieved purposively by eliciting the desired information from the target source. In their quest to obtain or rather draw out information from among themselves, the human kind has developed techniques that are unique to their languages and the Tonga language is no exception. Therefore, this study will focus on the grammar of interrogatives in Tonga and it will seek to establish the techniques unique to Tonga, which are employed to elicit information.

Siemund (2001) confirms the assertion that languages of the world have unique techniques for eliciting information. He submits that, most if not all languages have developed some particular means dedicated to eliciting information, which he called interrogative constructions or simply interrogatives. He further argues that, in addition, there is always the option to eschew interrogatives and use non-canonical means for obtaining information. This is to suggest that there are other non-conventional styles of obtaining information and these may be through opportunistic experiences among others where information is gained without soliciting for it. However, these other styles are not subject for deliberation in this study but he surmises that depending on the kind of information sought, we can differentiate essentially three types of interrogatives across the world's languages. They may be used to:

- (i) ask whether a proposition or its negation is true,
- (ii) inquire which values (if any) instantiate the variables of an open proposition and
- (iii) query which element of a set of alternatives makes an open sentence true:

He illustrates each of the three intentions above;

- (1) (i) Does a platypus lay eggs?
- (ii) What is a platypus?
- (iii) Is a platypus a mammal or a bird? (2001:2)

Siemund (2001) referred to the three types of interrogative sentences as shown above in (1) as, 'polar interrogatives', 'constituent interrogatives' and 'alternative interrogatives' respectively. In chapter Two, each of these identified types is discussed in details. In what follows, a cursory look at each is provided.

In the later work which Siemund collaborated with Konig, (Konig and Siemund 2007) they cluster interrogatives according to their syntactic and semantic functions and the resultant two groups are; Polar interrogatives and information questions. The information questions' group constitutes a cluster of what Siemund had earlier referred to as the constituent and alternative

interrogatives. According to Siemund (2001), another criteria used to identify questions is by bearing in mind the types of possible answers that may be obtained from the questions, these include the yes/no questions, alternative questions, tag questions and the wh- questions. ‘Yes/no’ questions are interrogatives where the expected answer is either yes or no. Alternative questions are questions in which the speaker provides the addressee with possible options to choose from and they are characterised by words such as either and or, and Wh- questions are those that seek information or require the addressee to provide a detailed response. Meanwhile the tag questions require a positive or negative confirmation to the questions attached or tagged onto the ending of a declarative statement. Payne (1997) submits that interrogative structures are grammatical channels of showing that a sentence requires information to be provided. It is important to note that interrogative sentences are formed by question features, such as a specific intonation and specific arrangement of the word order. These two features are undergirded by the phonology and syntax respectively. The study will spend great deal of time on these two aspects as they bear on in interrogatives in Tonga.

As earlier alluded to above, interrogative sentences are a common phenomenon in all languages of the world and there is no exception to Tonga as it exhibits interesting aspects of the interrogative structure. This undertaking endeavoured to discover the structure of the existing interrogative techniques in Tonga by focussing on the types of sentences which are used for eliciting information, asking questions, and introducing deliberations. The data collected and presented in chapter five shows the interplay between and among of phonology, morphology, and syntax in order to provide semantically motivated interrogatives in Tonga.

### **1.3. Area of Study**

This study was conducted in Choma town in the Choma District of Southern Province of Zambia. The selection of this research site of Choma was supported by the fact that Choma town is the provincial headquarters of Southern Province where plateau Tonga is primarily spoken in Zambia. In addition to this geographical fact, Choma provided the best linguistic space as it is the home of the plateau Tonga speakers, the variety of Tonga under investigation. Choma district, which is the most central district in southern province in terms of location, is one of the 13 districts of this Province and it is bordered by Sinazongwe district on the South, Kalomo on the West, Namwala in the North and Pemba district in the East, Monze district on the North- East and Zimba on the South-West.

Figure 1.2 below shows the approximate geographical location of Southern Province in Zambia where Tonga and its varieties is spoken and also locates the research site.



Source: Compiled by Author 2018

**Southern Province of Zambia**

**Figure 1.2: Showing the general location of Southern Province where Tonga is mainly spoken.**

#### **1.4. Statement of the Problem**

It is evident from available literature that a considerable amount of research has been conducted on interrogatives and question formation techniques in English and other African languages but not comprehensively on Tonga. It is noted that Tonga grammar has been discussed from different angles, for example literature on different studies that have examined the structure of Tonga in terms of Syntax, Morphology and dialectology, exist, (for example, Wakumelo 1997: Jimaima, 2008; Jimaima, 2014; Sibajene, 2013), but there is currently no study that has been conducted to examine interrogatives in Tonga comprehensively. Fell (1918) in his study on a grammar of Tonga, suggests rules for the Tonga language and vaguely looks at interrogative

pronouns. Carter (2002) simply gave an outline of the interrogative particles used in the formation of polar interrogatives. The work did not discuss these interrogatives particles in detail, in terms of their morphological form, phonological aspects and their syntactic distribution. Further, the study did not discuss the formation of other interrogative types such as the constituent and alternative interrogatives, which this study does. Question formation is an essential facet of a language's grammar. This fact presents an agent need to have this gap filled. Therefore, this study attempts to provide an extensive, detailed and more comprehensive description of the interrogative formation techniques in Tonga with regards to the structure, strategies used, as well as expected responses.

### **1.5. Aim**

The aim of the study was to provide a comprehensive description of interrogatives in Tonga, a language spoken in Zambia.

### **1.6. Specific Objectives**

- i. To provide a taxonomy of interrogative markers in Tonga.
- ii. To account for the morphological form and phonological aspects of interrogatives markers in Tonga.
- iii. To establish the syntactic distribution of the interrogative markers in Tonga.
- iv. To examine the manifestation of semantics in the formation of interrogatives in Tonga.

### **1.7. Research Questions**

- i. What are the interrogative markers in Tonga?
- ii. What is the morphological form and role of phonology of interrogative markers in Tonga?
- iii. What is the syntactic distribution of interrogatives markers and their interaction with focus?
- iv. What is the semantic manifestation in interrogative formation in Tonga?

## **1.8. Rationale**

The analysis of interrogative constructions in Tonga is an area which has not received enough attention. This fact has greatly influenced this undertaking. Thus, the study is relevant in the sense that it will seek to provide a comprehensive record on question formation in Tonga. This work will add to the already existing literature on Tonga, especially that question formation is an important aspect of a language's grammar. Furthermore, the study may act as a reference point to would be researchers on Interrogatives in other Zambian languages, owing to the fact that it is the first of its kind to widely explore interrogatives in a Zambian language.

## **1.9. Scope of the Study**

The study restricts itself to the study of the grammar of interrogatives in Tonga as it relates to (i) the structure (ii) the syntactic distribution of the interrogative markers (iii) the phonological importance in interrogative structures as well as (iv) the semantic manifestation in the formation of interrogatives. Thus, the study identifies the question particles in the language, their form, place of occurrence in the construction of interrogatives and the semantic outcomes of these interrogatives. The study will serve as a base for comparative study among the other Zambian languages in the near future and add to the literature on interrogative construction.

## **1.10. Operational Definitions**

### **1.10.1. Interrogatives**

Interrogatives refer to features that are used to form questions

### **1.10.2. Intonation**

Intonation is the variation of spoken pitch that is not used to distinguish words while tone is the variation of speech that can distinguish words in some languages, either lexically or grammatically (Roach, 2009).

### **1.10.3. Ex-situ**

Ex-situ refers to the initial position in a sentence that a word/particle can occupy. Sometimes referred to as Initial position.

#### **1.10.4. In-situ**

In-situ refers to the final position in a sentence that a word/particle can occupy.

### **1.11. Organisation of Thesis**

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter one introduces the study by discussing the general background to the investigation, thereby putting it into context. The chapter also outlines the purpose and objectives of the study, the specific research questions which addressed the objectives and also the rationale or significance of the study.

In chapter two, the literature reviewed was based on the findings of several researchers around the world that were considered to be directly relevant to the current study. The review of the literature provides relevant insights on the research that are enriching to the current investigation. The literature examined is not limited to studies conducted in Zambia but also those conducted on African languages and those in other parts of the world. The chapter undertook a survey on aspects of interrogative constructions, the syntax of interrogatives, question particles in general, Interrogative words and phrases, the morphology of interrogatives and suprasegmental features in Tonga. Finally, a review of other studies conducted on interrogative constructions was done so as to guide the current research.

Chapter three presents the theoretical framework within which the study was undertaken by defining and illustrating some of the major concepts relating to the study. This has been achieved by providing a historical perspective of descriptive linguistics as well as its ideologies and approaches. This culminates into the justification of the choice of the Basic Linguistic Theory (BLT) as a theoretical framework to guide this study.

Chapter four discusses the methodology used in the collection of data that was used in answering the research questions raised. It highlights on the research design, sampling and the research instruments employed. It further discusses the methods used in collecting the data as well as the statistical methods used for the analysis of the data.

In Chapter five, all the data or findings on polar, constituent and alternative interrogative markers is presented and discussed in details, in line with the research objectives and theoretical framework of the study. The findings on the type of interrogative particles and the strategies

used in the formation of these interrogatives in Tonga is presented and discussed. The chapter further discusses the morphology, phonology, syntax and semantics of these interrogative particles. Some aspects of focus in the interrogatives are also discussed in the chapter.

Chapter six presents conclusions of all the findings as well as some recommendations to various stakeholders according to the findings of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the review of literature which is related and relevant to inform the current study. The aim was to obtain background knowledge about the subject under study. As there is little evidence to show a scholarly engagement with interrogatives in a Zambian language, the review of literature eschews towards non-Zambian languages studied outside Zambia, that is, within Africa and beyond. To this end, the review will restrict itself mostly to English and Bantu languages that are non-Zambian. The focus is strictly restricted to interrogatives or rather question formation studies that directly or indirectly provide relevant background information to the study.

#### 2.1. Aspects of Interrogative Constructions

##### 2.1.1. The Syntax of Interrogatives

One of the objectives that the current study set out to achieve is: to establish the syntactic distribution of interrogative markers in Tonga. Therefore, the review of literature on the syntax of interrogatives in general will guide in identifying the syntax of interrogatives in the target language. Borrowing from the 1970 linguistic era, Baker (1970) argued that most syntactic approaches to questions have assumed that one way or another, a question-morpheme is merged into the left periphery of the sentence – typically, in what would be called the ex-situ or initial position. With such a view, it can be assumed that all languages subscribe to the assignment of interrogative features to the left-peripheral of the sentence. However, other scholars like Dryer (Dryer 2011), have argued that cross linguistically, there are some languages which normally place wh-phrases at the beginning of sentences, as in English, while other languages normally leave such phrases in situ or the final position in sentences, as in the example below in (1) from Zulu, a language spoken in South Africa:

1. U-bona        ini? Or U-bona-ni?

2SG-see        what

'What do you see?'

(Sabel & Zeller 2006))

The example above confirms the possibility of other positions that interrogative markers can occupy other than the ex-situ. There are some languages which usually place wh-phrases at the ex-situ while optionally placing them in the final position. One such language is Kinyaranda, spoken in Rwanda. Observe example (2) below.

2. a. Umugore jíše nde?  
woman killed INTW-who  
'Who did the woman kill?'

b. Ni-nde umugore jíše ?  
FOC INTW-who woman kill  
'Who did the woman kill?'

(Maxwell 1981)

Dryer developed maps that shows the position of question particles in polar interrogatives and the other on the position of interrogative words and phrases in constituent interrogatives in different languages of the world. The subsequent sub-sections will discuss the representation of the position of question particle in polar interrogatives and interrogative words and phrases in constituent interrogatives as cited in Dryer (2005).

#### 2.1.1.1. Question Particles: Distribution and position in sentences based on Dryer (2005)

Value	Representation
Question particle at beginning of sentence	129
Question particle at end of sentence	314
Question particle in second position in sentence	52
Question particle with other position	8
Question particle in either of two positions	26
No question particle	355
<b>Total:</b>	<b>884</b>

2.1 Table showing the distribution and position of question particles

From Dryer's (2005) map on the position of question particles as observed from 884 languages, languages with question particles that occur at the beginning of the sentence in the formation of polar interrogatives are 129, languages with question particles at the end are 314, those with



The examples above show some languages of the world and the position that question particles occupy. In example (3) !xoo a language spoken in Botswana has the question particle occurring at the end of the sentence. The second type include languages that have question particle at the end of the sentence and one example of such language is Hatam as in (4) a language spoken in West Papuan in Indonesia. The third type includes languages with question particles that occur in positions other than the initial, second of final positions as in (5) from Hmong Njua spoken in China. The fourth type on Dryer’s map consists of languages in which the question particle can occur in either the initial position or final position as in (6). According to Dryer’s map, there are some languages without question particles. French is another example of a language with an initial position interrogative particle and the example in (7) demonstrates this wherein, an expression *est-ce que*, a verb plus demonstrative plus complementiser, is grammatically used as an interrogative particle.

7. French

Est-ce que	le	president	vient?
QP	the	president	come – PRES – 3SG

‘Is the president coming?’  
(Harris 1988:18)

Another perfect example in which the particle can also occur at the beginning of the sentence to mark polar interrogatives is in Kiowa. This is illustrated below,

8. Kiowa

Kɔ a-ki an det-mɔn yaggop  
QP 2POSS-husband hab. 2SG obj-wave .imperf.  
(Watkin 1984:211 as cited in Dryer 2005b:470)

However, in other languages, the interrogative particle occurs in the final position of the sentence, as shown in example (9) in Hatan, a language spoken in Indonesia and (10) in Majang a Nilo-Saharan language spoken in Ethiopia. It is worth noting that in sentence final interrogative particles, enclitics are in some cases used and they often encliticise onto the last word in a sentence as illustrated.

9. Hatan

a-yai	bi-dani	mem	di-ngat	i
2SG- Get	to-me	for	1SG-see	QP

‘Would you give it to me so that I can see it?’

(Reesink 1999:69)

10. Majang

Den-e            daaki            Tolay=n  
3SG-See        Name –Daaki    Tolay=QP  
‘Did Daaki see Tolay?’

(Unseth 1989:126)

Another common placement of the question particle in some languages of the world is second position in the sentence, which follows the first word or constituent of the sentence, and every so often encliticise onto the first constituent in some instances, as shown in example (11) and (12) from Yurok and Mono of California.

11. Yurok

Kic            hes    nesk<sup>w</sup> ec ok<sup>w</sup>    ku            wɪʔyɪs  
PST            QP    come-3SG    DEF            girl  
‘Has the girl come back yet?’

(Robins 1958:139)

12. Mono

Charley=wa? Mia pi  
Charley=QP go-PERF  
‘Has Charley left?’

(Norris 1986:44)

In other languages, the interrogative particle can occur in two positions represented by the four types mentioned above, or they can occur in either the initial or the second position, where there are two distinct interrogative particles, each associated with one of these two positions (Kutch 1994:379). Finally, there are some languages that do not use interrogative particles to mark a statement as a question. According to Dryer, such languages include those that have interrogative affixes on verbs, languages which mark polar questions by use of a different word order, and languages in which the interrogative sentences differ from declarative sentences only in intonation (2005).

### 2.1.1.2. Interrogative words and Phrases

The table below shows the occurrence of interrogative phrases on the syntactic principle of obligatoriness. As is shown, three language groups arise based on this criterion.

Value	Representation
Interrogative phrases obligatorily initial.	264
Interrogative phrases not obligatorily initial.	615
Some interrogative phrases obligatorily initial, some not.	23
<b>Total</b>	902

### 2.2 Table showing occurrence of interrogative words and phrases

According to Dryer (2013), there are two common patterns cross linguistically for the position of interrogative words and phrases. According to Dryer's map, 264 world languages have interrogative phrases occurring obligatorily at the beginning of the sentence. An example of such language is English as shown in (7).

13. Who                      did    you    see?  
          INTW           PST    2SG   verb

In the example above, notice the interrogative word 'who' that is placed in sentence initial. In other languages, interrogative phrases occur in the final position of the sentence and this cohort constitutes 615 languages of the world according to Dryer's map. This is the most common position of interrogative phrases in African languages. In fact, Dryer postulates that the two major types represented on the map are both widespread, but there are clear geographical patterns. He states that the areas in the world with languages which obligatorily place interrogative phrases in initial position include (i) Europe and North Africa; (ii) the Philippines and the adjacent areas; (iii) much of Australia, except the northern part of Northern Territory and Cape York in the northeast; (iv) the western part of Canada and the United States; (v) Mesoamerica; and (vi) much of South America. Areas in which languages which do not obligatorily place interrogative phrases in initial position include (i) much of Africa, though less so in the west and northwest; (ii) most of the mainland of Asia, plus Japan; and (iii) New Guinea and the Pacific. Languages of a mixed type seem also to exhibit some geographical clustering: (i) there are a number in the general vicinity of Indonesia and the western Pacific; and (ii) there are also a number in West Africa. An example of languages which predominantly

place interrogative phrases in the final position is Lango, a Nilotic language spoken in Uganda as in (14).

14. Lango.  
 òkélò ò-nènò                      ñà  
 Okelo 3SG –see-PERF              who  
 ‘Who did Okelo see?’

(Noonan 1992:173)

It has been observed from the discussion that syntactically, interrogative markers tend to favour peripheral slots, in that, interrogatives can occupy both the left and the right peripheral slots. Dryer argues that languages in which interrogative phrases occur in the same position as corresponding noninterrogative phrases are described as placing them in-situ or rather in the final position.

### 2.1.2. The Morphology of Interrogatives

In the formation of polar interrogatives, question particles are added to a corresponding declarative sentence to indicate that it is a question. The interrogative particles can be in the form of a free or bound morphemes. In Maybrat a language spoken in Papua, Indonesia, the interrogative morpheme is a particle that is added to the end of the sentence, as in (9).

15. ana                      m-amo              Kumurkek      a  
 3-PL                      3-go                      Kumurkek      Q  
 ‘Are they going to Kumurkek?’

(Dol, 1999:200)

Example (15) contains the particle ‘a’ which acts as an interrogative marker in the formation of polar interrogatives. Apart from standing alone as a single morpheme, the clitic can be bound. Dryer (2013) treats such interrogative clitics, that attach to some word, but which exhibit freedom as to the category of word they attach to, as question particles. An example of such a phenomena is borrowed from Fyem, a Niger-Congo language spoken primarily in Nigeria. Example in (16) below shows how the question particle attaches morphologically as a clitic to what is the last word in the sentence.

16. taa                      won              aré=n =a  
 3SG-PERF      wash              clothes=DEF =Q  
 ‘Did she wash the clothes?’

(Nettle, 1998:50)

As illustrated in (16), in the question particle -a attaches to the object noun phrase aré=n ‘the clothes’. Another form of interrogatives used in the formation of polar questions involves the use of distinct interrogative verbal morphology. The verbal morphology may include the use of an affix that specifically indicates that the utterance is a question, as in (17) from Hunzib a language spoken in Russia.

17. eʎ'e-čó- y  
go-PRES-1/2-Q  
‘Are you going?’

(Van den Berg 1995:112)

Dryer observes that in some languages, the verbal morphology involved in questions is more fusional and it is more difficult to isolate a specific morpheme as the interrogative morpheme. This observation is supported by Breeze who states that in Omotic, a language spoken in Ethiopia, there is a set of pronominal subject suffixes used in polar questions that are completely different from the subject affixes used in declarative sentences (1990:33). Dryer further argues that the distinction between separate question particles and interrogative affixes is not always clear. Therefore, morphemes which attach to the verb are all treated as instances of interrogative verb morphology.

In the formation of constituent interrogatives, languages of the world use either interrogative words or phrases. Dryer postulates that all languages have a set of interrogative words that are characteristic of constituent interrogatives. These words belong to different word categories such as interrogative pronouns, interrogative adjectives, and interrogative verbs. As a specific objective, the current study sought to establish the morphological form of interrogatives in Tonga. Thus, the literature will help in identifying the form(s) of interrogatives markers in the formation of interrogatives in Tonga.

### **2.1.3. Suprasegmental Features in Tonga**

The fourth objective of the current study is to examine the manifestation of phonology in the formation of interrogative in Tonga. Therefore, enquiry into the suprasegmental features of Tonga will be beneficial in the quest to attain this objective. Tone is one of the major features in the phonology of Tonga. Yip (2002) defines tone as the use of pitch in language to distinguish lexical from grammatical meaning, that is, to distinguish or inflect words. Languages that have this feature are called tonal languages. Yin suggests that tonal languages are common in East and Southeast Asia, the Pacific, Africa and the Americas. He further

estimates that as many as seventy percent of world languages may be tonal. Bantu languages, which are spoken in Africa, are especially known for their often complex and distinctive tone systems. Most Bantu languages are regarded as two-level languages with regards to tone with restricted modifications on the basis of High/Low tone contrast. Odden (2015) observes that some West African Bantu languages like Ntumu, Kombe, and Bafia have a contrast between prepausal falling L and non-falling L. He further proposes that, Bantu noun stems can exhibit the combinatorial limit on H and L freely distributed over the two syllables of canonical stems, and class prefixes have no underlying tone. However, certain patterns may be rare because of historical tone changes. It has been observed also by Odden that, in some Bantu languages, the roots have only a two-way distinction between H and L tones regardless of length, with no underlying distinctions in where the tone is realized; some languages lack even that contrast. With regards to tone mobility, Odden proposes that Bantu languages have processes expanding the domain of H to the right or to the left and the most common expansion is to the right, except that final tones frequently expand to the left. Tonga like most Bantu languages is tonal and is in sharp contrast with English which does not use pitch but instead uses intonation. Pitch is lexically and grammatically significant in language if the words or their grammatical function is distinguished solely by its distinctive use within them (Hyman 1982). It is contrastive but relative because the tonemic nature of each syllable can only be determined by contrasting it with the surrounding syllables, in that, the tone of a syllable can be described as high only if the tone of syllables immediately around it is low in relation to it and vice versa. In Tonga, tone is determined by whether a vowel is uttered with a high or low pitch in comparison with the surrounding vowels. Basically two tones are needed to describe the tonal system of Tonga, these are high and low tones (H/L). One feature common in Tonga is what is termed as downdrift. Connell (2001) defines downdrift as a cumulative lowering of pitch in the course of an utterance due to interactions among tone in tonal languages. The successive lowering of tone can be noticed in example (12) and pattern demonstrated below;

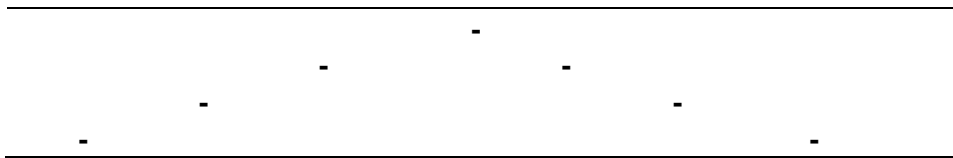
18. Baka zyana jilo  
 ‘They danced yesterday.’



Connel explains that downdrift occurs when both the high and low tone in the beginning of the sentence becomes slightly lower, until the end of the intonational phrase, when the pitch is ‘reset’. In other instances the opposite happens, and a sequence of high tone may become progressively higher in pitch as in example (13). This phenomenon is called crescendo.

19. Waka'lya' jilo?

‘Did you eat yesterday?’



With regards to accent in Tonga, it is found that the high tone comes before a low tone, or a pause. The syllable on which the high tone falls is accented. In the following word Musimbi the -si- which comes immediately before the syllable -mbi with a low tone, is stressed. This stress pattern however has no grammatical or lexical significance whatsoever because whatever stress is notable, seems to be bound to tone. This is because all syllables tend to be evenly stressed in Tonga, in that each syllable tends to be uttered with the same degree of force.

## 2.2. Types of Interrogatives

The foundation of interrogatives in Tonga is the declarative sentence from which they are derived. The Tonga language basically has an SVO word order and it is primarily a tone language that uses a change in fundamental frequencies to denote lexical and grammatical differences in meaning. Like most Bantu languages which have an extensive noun classification system, Tonga has an obligatory prefixing to mark number, and concord between the noun phrase and verb or with any other category within the structure. Noun classes usually serve a purpose of revealing grammatical number, such as singularity and plurality. As already stated, the starting point for interrogatives is the declarative sentence which has a structure as exemplified in (20) below,

20. Declarative sentences in Tonga

a. Mu-sankwa wa-ka-jala mu-lyango.

CL1-boy SC PST-close CL3-door

‘The boy closed the door’

21. Ba-simbi    ba    ka    bweza    mu-tiba    wa    mwana  
 CL2-girls    SC2    PST    APPL-take    CL3-plate    OC3    CL1-child  
 ‘The girls took the child’s plate’

The declarative sentences exemplified in (20) above display a rudimental SVO word order. The subject of the sentence is in constant agreement with the verb of the sentence through an agreement marker that relates with the noun in its noun class as shown in (20) where *wa-* a subject concord is in agreement with the noun prefix ‘mu’ in *Musankwa* which is in class 1 of the nominal classes and subject concord *ba-* with noun *basimbi* in class 2 of the nominal classes respectively. The object of the declarative sentence follows the verb and is in agreement with an object concord in its noun class as in *wa-* and noun *mutiba* of noun class 3 (in example 21).

### 2.2.1. Polar Interrogatives

According to Konig and Siemund (2007) six techniques of expressing polar questions are encountered across the languages of the world. Categorised according to frequency, they include (i) special intonation patterns, (ii) interrogative particles, (iii) the addition of special tags, (iv) disjunctive negative structures, (v) a change in the relative order of constituents and (vi) particular verbal inflection. In Tonga however, only intonation marking and the use of interrogative particles are used as strategies for expressing polar interrogatives. In what follows, strategies of marking polar interrogatives are discussed.

#### 2.2.1.1 Strategies of marking Polar interrogatives

#### 2.2.1.2 Tone Marking

Konig and Siemund (2007) state that the great majority of languages in the world use rising intonation in conjunction with interrogatives. In fact, the use of rising question intonation in yes-no question has been suggested to be one of the patterns that occur systematically across natural languages, potentially true for all languages (1972). Notable examples of languages that use tone or pitch are English and Russian with a rising intonation and falling intonation in English and Russian respectively as observed by (Payne 1997:295, Boadi 1990:72). Tonga like most Bantu languages uses tone to mark interrogatives as shall be shown in the chapter on finding, which is also consistent with the general agreement among the literature on the role of tone in most Bantu languages. Tone is both lexically and grammatically contrastive (Mtenje

1986). According to the Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary, Lexical meaning is, "the meaning of the word considered in isolation from the sentence containing it, and regardless of its grammatical context, e.g. of love in or as represented by loves, loved, loving." According to Lyons (1995:52) a lexeme may have different word-forms and these word-forms will generally differ in meaning: their grammatical meaning. Kutch (1994) acknowledges the role of tone as he she confirms each African tone language uses tone in different ways to signal contrasts in the lexicon and grammar. The basic tone system (two or more tones) and the basic word structure (isolating or agglutinative) play a significant role in the way in which tone functions in a language. Kutch explains that, in the lexicon, minimal pairs or sets for tone will be found distinguishing two or more nouns or verb infinitives and that in many languages, tone functions much more heavily in the grammar where it distinguishes between certain verb tense/aspect forms, where the contrastive tone may occur either on the verb stem itself, on the subject pronoun/prefix preceding the verb stem, or on both.

In marking polar interrogatives using tone, Louw (1968:88) observes that, "the tone sequences may stay basically the same in statements and questions, except in the last, the relative key in which all these tones are spoken is raised very high and the long length which occurs as boundary marker in the statements, becomes much shorter and if the tone on this shortened syllable is high, it becomes much higher and if it is low it remains rather low." The high pitch intonation used in marking interrogatives from declarative sentences when asking questions, usually signal some aspects of speaker uncertainty, indecision, hesitation and insecurity. In some instances, the use of intonation to mark yes-no questions is usually coupled with grammatical marking. According to Holmberg (2011), negative questions demand an elliptical sentence as an answer: which is basically an omission from the clause, of one or more words that are nevertheless understood in the context of the remaining elements. Such questions are answered using the main verb in the question and adding a prefix that marks for grammatical number and affirmative or negative sense (Marketa 2007). This phenomenon of answer ellipsis is common in Chinese because this language does not have words that are compared to *yes* and *no*. Therefore, as Dryer argues, in providing a response to a polar question in Chinese, one has to literally answer using the main verb in the question demanding a response. For example, when asked, "*Do you like tea?*" one has to answer literally *like*, for affirmative or literally *not like* for negative. But when asked "*Do you play basketball?*" one needs to answer literally *I play* for affirmative and literally *I don't play* for negative (Dryer, M 2005).

### **2.2.1.3. Interrogative Particles**

Another feature that is used in marking interrogatives is the addition of an interrogative particle. The particle serves to convert a statement into a yes – no question, without having any other meaning. A declarative sentence is simply modified by the addition of an interrogative particle that transforms it into a question. Dryer (2013) argues that particles used to mark polar interrogatives are in contrast with other interrogative words, particularly from those which are used to form wh-questions. He further explains that the interrogative particles used to mark polar questions, are non-inflectional morphemes that function specifically to mark this function and display some degree of independence: for example an affix, clitic or independent word. There are different positions in which an interrogative particle is placed when marking polar interrogative and this may vary according to languages. This aspect of interrogative particle placement has already been extensively discussed in subsection 2.1.1.1. above.

### **2.2.1.4 Focus in Polar Interrogatives**

Halliday (1967) defines focus as, “a grammatical category that determines which part of the sentence contributes new, non-derivable, or contrastive information.” Focus is manifested by different structural means in different languages, such that a common focus feature may be realised through, for example, a morpheme in one language and syntactic movement in another. One prominent language that uses focus is English, which makes use of stress to achieve focus in an utterance by placing it on a particular constituent in a polar question. In the words of Matic (2013), focus is a strategy in which a speaker uses an element in a sentence to code information that is desired to be prominent for the sake of understanding what is being communicated or being implied. Matic elaborates this notion by stating that, when speakers communicate, they increase their common ground, i.e the information that they share, by linking new information to the information that is already part of the common ground. Examples (22) and (23), are given from English wherein focus is usually marked with pitch accent, which is underlined in the example. In example (22), speaker B assumes that the speaker A knows that the mouse was killed, but does not know who did it. Speaker B therefore marks the subject of the sentence, the dog for focus to indicate that this is the element that updates the common ground. In example (23), the common ground update is provided by the objects of the sentence, the mouse. Example (24), is acquired from a language called Ute which uses cleft constructions in marking focus in polar interrogatives.

22. A. Who killed the mouse? / It looks like the cat killed a mouse

B. (No), The dog killed it.

23. A. What did the dog kill? / I think the dog killed a bird.

B. (No), It killed a mouse.

(De Gruyter, 2015:92)

24. a. Declarative: Joe killed the goat.

b. Subject cleft: Was it Joe who killed the goat?

c. Object cleft: was it the goat that Joe killed?

d. Verb cleft: was it killing that Joe did to the goat?

(Givón 2001:298)

In some languages of the world, particularly West-African languages, morphological marking and syntactic displacement strategies are used to mark focus. An example of morphological marking in Byali, the Gur language can be seen in line 2 of example (25), wherein the focus marker è follows the focused element. Line 2 of example (26) from Yoruba from the Benue-Congo language group, shows a combination of morphological and syntactic marking, with the focused element occurring in sentence-initial position followed by the focus marker ni.

25. A. ù nōndó bāārē

C.SBJ buy.PFV what

‘What has (s)he bought?’

B. ù nōndó bànānā é

C.SBJ buy.PFV banana FOC

‘(S)he has bought [bananas]FOC.’

(Reineke 2007: 228)

26. A. kí lo rà

what FOC:2s buy

‘What did you buy?’

B: aʒo ni mo ra  
clothes FOC 1s buy  
'I bought [clothes] FOC.'

(Bisang & Sonaiya 2000: 179-180)

Focus can also be marked on elements of the sentence. The subject of the sentence can be given prominence in what is called subject focus. Object and verb focus is a type of focus in which the object or verb of the sentence is given prominence respectively. Focus for adjuncts is marked the same way as other constituents of a sentence. Adjuncts marked for focus are usually adverbs of time and place which basically give us more information about the verb of the sentence.

### **2.2.2. Constituent Interrogatives**

Constituent interrogatives, otherwise also called wh-questions, or content questions differ from the polar interrogatives both in form and their intended meaning. These types of questions do not just demand for the truth value of a proposition, but demand that the addressee provide extra information that allows them to complete the interpretation of the proposition. It is typically used in a discourse when the speaker misses an element of a given statement and assumes that the hearer knows this required information. Consequently, the speaker requests the hearer to share this piece of missing information with him. Languages of the world have different devices and strategies dedicated to the function of eliciting information and they all have what are known as interrogative words that are placed strategically in a sentence when forming this type of question. In many languages, interrogative words may be different grammatically and they may belong to various word classes. These types of questions contain what are called interrogative words or phrases and they differ from polar interrogatives in that they elicit a specific answer other than 'yes' or 'no'. The simple way of identifying constituent interrogatives is by observing the type of answers they lobby and the prominent use of the interrogative words.

#### **2.2.2.1. Formation of Constituent Interrogatives**

There are different strategies used in the formation of Constituent interrogatives across the languages of the world. Zentz (2016) argues that the strategies can be categorised according to whether the wh-phrase is pronounced in its scopal position, its canonical position, or in

between. In other words, syntactic position of interrogative words serve as a critical criterion for the formation of constituent interrogatives. The typical syntactic positions of interrogative phrases may include (i) placing interrogative words obligatorily in clause-initial position, (ii) interrogative words optionally fronted, and (iii) placing interrogative words in final position. In obligatorily fronting languages, Cable (2010) concludes that the interrogative word occurs in the clause initial position obligatorily. This initial placement may change the neutral word order of the clause. In contrast, other languages allow the placing of the interrogative word in clause initial position, but under certain circumstances it can also occur in non-initial positions.

Thirdly, in the *in situ* languages, interrogative words occur in the position for their constituent type (König & Siemund 2007: 302). It is also argued that the position of interrogative words, depends to some extent, on the basic word order type of a particular language and Greenberg’s discovery seems to support this argument. He found that, there was a systematic correlation between VSO order and fronted interrogative words as well as between SOV order and the *in-situ* parameter. He puts it this way, “If a language has dominant order VSO in declarative sentences, it always puts interrogative words or phrases first in interrogative word questions; if it has dominant order SOV in declarative sentences, there is never such an invariant rule” (1966:82). However, this correlation cannot be completely established for SOV and SVO languages. Dryer (2005) concludes that there are only two common patterns cross linguistically, that are used in the positioning of interrogatives words or phrases; which is at the beginning or at the final position of the sentence. He argues that, if a language allows interrogative words or phrases to occur in any other position other than the two common positions, that language is treated as obligatorily an *in-situ* language. Example (27), shows (i) Chinese as a language that retains the interrogative word in a slot appropriate to its function in the clause, (ii) English as a language that shifts the question word to the initial position of the sentence, and (iii) Singaporean Malay which allows both *in-situ* and full movement, but it also permits question phrases to appear at an intermediate clause boundary in a strategy known as partial interrogative word movement, (iv) Zulu, a language spoken in South Africa, which is an optional *wh-in situ* language. Zulu permits both the *wh-in situ* and *wh-in situ* with *wh-objects*.

27. a. *In-situ* (Chinese)

Huǎngróng	xiāngxìn	Guojing mǎile	<b>shěnmē?</b>
Huangrong	believe	Guójìng bought	<b>what?</b>

‘What does Huangrong believe that Guojing bought?’

(Cheng 2009: 770)

b. Ex-situ (English)

**What** do you think we found?

c. Partial movement (Singaporean Malay)

Kamu percaya      **ke mana**      Mary      pergi?

You believe      **where**      Mary      go?

‘Where do you believe Mary went?’

(Cole & Hermon 1998:225)

d. U-bona      **ubani?**      Or      U-bona-**ni?**

2SG-see      who (class 1a)

‘Who do you see?’

(Sabel & Zeller 2006:272)

Example (27a) shows the position of the question word as it occurs in Mandarin Chinese which is the final position also referred to as the in-situ position. English as shown in (27b) positions the interrogative word strategically in the initial position. Languages like English, which place interrogative phrases in the initial position, the interrogative phrases may cause changes in the basic word order of the clause, like in (27b) where the word order is OVS instead of the canonical SVO. In as much as English is typically a fronting language, it does permit in some instances for the interrogative phrases to occur in situ especially in echo questions. Singaporean Malay allows for partial movement of the interrogative element. (27d) illustrates Zulu which is an optional wh-in situ language.

It is worth noting that in some instances, constituent interrogatives may have more than one interrogative word. This type is called multiple question but however, as Siemund submits, languages belonging to this category, can allow only one interrogative element in sentence initial position, and the other interrogative phrase remains in situ ( Siemund 2001:1024). This is shown below in (28).

28. Who gave what to whom?

(Siemund 2001: 1024)

However, in contrast to the above, there are some languages which permit all the possible multiple interrogative words/phrases to occur in the initial position. Amongst other languages, Russian is a typical multiple fronting language as in (29)

29. Kto kogo ljubit?  
 Who who.ACC love.3SG  
 ‘Who loves whom?’

(Siemund 2001: 1024)

### 2.2.3. Alternative Interrogatives

As earlier stated in the introduction, alternative interrogative are question types that require a selection from two or more options which the addressee is expected to choose his answer from. König and Siemund (2007:291) state that alternative interrogatives are therefore that give the option of choosing from two alternatives, or a set or range of possibilities. Further, as earlier alluded to, alternative interrogatives are similar to wh-questions in that they present possible answers which cannot simply be represented as yes or no, but the variation between different answers is introduced through a disjunction rather than through a wh-word. As observed by Issah (2015:55), alternative interrogatives ‘present two or more possible answers’ and presupposes that only one of the presented alternatives is true. He notes further that when one speaker asks an alternative question, he/she is simply in search of an answer as to whether say q or p holds. This can be illustrated as in example (30) from Mandarin which uses the disjunction háishi.

30. nǐ xiǎng hē kāfēi háishi hóngchá (ne)?<sup>1</sup>  
 You want drink coffee HAISHI tea Q

Alternative question: ‘Do you want to drink coffee or tea?’

Possible answers: ✓(I want) coffee; ✓(I want) tea; #Yes; #No.

(Erlwine 2016:1)

In example (30) above, the disjunction haishi is used to mark alternative interrogatives in Mandarin and this marker is syntactically placed between two coordinate clauses which are; ‘Do you want to drink coffee?’ and ‘Do you want to drink tea?’. Another example of a language that marks for alternative interrogatives is Dangme, belonging to the Kwa group of languages from the Niger-Congo family of languages in Ghana. Dangme uses interrogative particles ane,

lo and an alternative speech marker aloo to mark alternative interrogative sentences. The alternative clause marker or linker aloo or loo occurs in between two co-ordinate clauses. It is further argued that the alternative clause linker aloo or loo can occur alone in the clause to signal alternative answers to a question. Consider example (31) below.

31. a) Ata ya he tade aloo tokota?  
 Ata go buy dress or sandals  
 ‘Did Ata buy a dress or a pair of sandals?’

b). Anε Ata ya he tade aloo tokota?  
 INTW Ata go buy dress or sandals  
 ‘Did Ata go to buy a dress or a pair of sandals?’

c). Ata ya he tade aloo tokota lo?  
 Ata go buy dress or sandals INTW?  
 ‘Did Ata go to buy a dress or a pair of sandals?’

d). Anε Ata ya he tade aloo tokota lo?  
 INTW Ata go buy dress or sandals INTW  
 ‘Did Ata go to buy a dress or a pair of sandals?’

(Caesar, 2016:42)

In (31a), the speaker wants to know the item that Ata bought. The use of aloo gives the subject an alternative to choose from more than an item. Particularly, the speaker wanted to know whether Ata had bought ‘a dress’ or ‘a pair of sandals’. The fact that the alternatives are salient and one of the alternatives is selected, excludes the other alternative. In Japanese, alternative questions are marked by repeating the question morpheme after both alternatives (Hinds 1984:160 cited in Givón 2001: 300).

### 2.3. Some studies on Interrogative Constructions

There is a lot of study that has been conducted on the different aspects of the Tonga grammar. However, none of the available studies have adequately addressed the issue of interrogatives in Tonga. A study that attempted to address interrogatives in Tonga, is the work done by Fell

(1918) in *A Tonga Grammar*. He gave a list of interrogative pronouns in Tonga providing the forms of –ni ‘whose’, -nzi ‘what’, -di ‘which’ and nguni ‘whom’ in Tonga. This work is not comprehensive, hence the need for a detailed study of interrogatives in Tonga. Several studies on interrogatives in other languages of the world have been conducted and a few have been reviewed in this chapter.

Gazali (2012) studied the typology of questions in Kanuri, a member of the Saharan branch of the Nilo-Saharan phylum of African Languages spoken in Northern Nigeria, where it is shown that only two types of questions exist in the language: yes/no questions and wh-questions. Gazali focusses his study on the Yes/no questions in Kanuri language and he observes that the yes/no questions are formed by adding the suffix particle –*wa* to a sentence which is declarative in nature. He explains that the question particle –*wa* cannot stand at the end of a simple past declarative sentence except at the end of a present perfect or simple past negative declarative sentence. He further explains that the question particle can be suffixed to the subject complement, object complement and verb complement and verbs are moved when negated and suffixed by the question particle –*wa*. An illustration is given below in (32).

a. Modu    wa            ngəlaro        cuwu  
       modu q part.        Ram            bought  
                                   “Was it modu that bought a ram?”

b. Modu            ngəlaro wa    cuwu  
       modu            ram q part.    Bought  
                                   “Was it a ram that modu bought?”

c. Modu            ngəlaro        cuwuna wa  
       modu            ram            bought q part.  
                                   “Has modu bought a ram?”

(Gazali 2012:18)

The example above shows the formation of yes/no questions in Kanuri by adding the particle –*wa* to a declarative sentence. The question particle normally stands at the end of the sentence. This study is helpful in the sense that it could be similar to the current study since it will also

consider the types of interrogative features and their placements in Tonga and establish how they contribute to the formation of questions.

Issah (2013) explored the relationship between constituent interrogative formation and focus in Dagbani, a Gur (Niger-Congo) language predominantly spoken in the Northern region of Ghana. The study revealed that in the formation of constituent interrogatives, the interrogative word enters into a syntactic configuration with the focus markers *kà* or *n* depending on the grammatical role of the argument that an interrogative word substitutes. He explains that this is achieved by putting the interrogative word in clause initial position, and immediately place the appropriate focus marker. This is shown below in (33).

33. Wúlà      kà      bɛ      kpé-Ø      yílí      máá      ní ti?  
 How      FM      3SG      enter      house      DEF      LOC  
 ‘How have they entered the house?’

It was established that this distributional property of interrogative words serves as evidence that focused interrogative words and focused elements share morphosyntactic parallelism. The data are examined in line with the proposal that the variation in the positioning of interrogative words in languages can be explained by assuming that movement of interrogative words is universally triggered by [+wh] and [+focus] features, both of which are [+interpretable] and can be specified as [±strong]. His conclusion is that interrogative words in Dagbani occur in in-situ when no strong [+focus] features are introduced in the syntax, suggesting that Dagbani has both focused and non-focused interrogative words. As an objective, the study sought to establish the interaction of interrogative markers with focus in Tonga. Therefore, the study on the interaction of constituent interrogatives and focus in Dagbani will guide the current study in achieving this objective.

In *A Grammar of Logba* by Dorvlo (2008), a language spoken in Ghana and Togo, four types of questions were identified in the language and these include the polar questions, content questions, alternative questions and coordinate questions. He also identified three strategies that are used in the forming questions in Logba: prosodic pitch raising of the final syllable, the use of a question word and the use of special tags. He suggests that polar interrogatives are formed from declaratives by adding a raised pitch to the final syllable and that this rise varies from person to person. He further reveals that the particle ‘anaa’ can be added to the interrogative clause for the purpose of emphasis to suggest an angry mood of the speaker. Illustration is given below in (34).

34. Kofi        ɔsáá?  
 Kofi        ɔ-sá-á  
 Kofi SM.SG-leave-Q  
 ‘Did Kofi leave?’

(Kofi Dorvlo 2008:160)

As presented in (34), when the questioner wants to make the question emphatic, the particle *anáa* is added to the clause. Furthermore, Dorvlo advances that the final vowel of the particle can also be lengthened to show how impatient the speaker is toward the addressee. He states also that polar questions seek specific positive or negative answers from the addressee and that the responses to polar questions can be more elaborate by using a sentence form instead of just a simple yes/no answers. In view of the compartment of Logba during question formation, there is need to examine the behaviour of Tonga in the formation of interrogatives in relation to the strategies that it employs particularly tone.

Min and Park (2007) undertook a study analysing the indirect uses of interrogative sentences carrying anger in the Korean spoken language. They acknowledged the assertion that interrogative sentences are generally used to perform speech acts of directly asking a question or making a request, but they also argued that this type of sentence may also be used to convey such speech acts indirectly. The focus in their study was on the indirect use of interrogative sentences and they established that during utterances, in the indirect use of this sentence type, speakers usually carry an emotion which has a negative attitude close to an expression of anger. This aspect is is demonstrated in a conversation presented in (35).

35. a. 동규: 진짜 그것뿐이에요? 찬민이 좋아하는 마음 조금도 없어요?

Dong-kyu: Is really that all? Don't you like Chan-min at all?

- b. 수하: 내가 그 인간을 왜 좋아해요?

Sue-ha: Why Do I like the jerk?

- c. 하나도 안 좋아해.

I don't like him at all.

- d. 지금 갈아선 황동규 씨 보다 백배 천배 만배 더 싫구만!!

I hate him hundred, thousand, and million times more than Mr. Whang Dong-kyu!

(Min and Park 2007:318)

They further argued that the interrogatives used for indirect speech acts could serve as a dominant marker for identifying the emotional attitudes, such as anger, as compared to other emotion-related markers, such as discourse markers, adverbial words, and syntactic markers. To support such an argument, Min and Park, analysed some dialogues that they collected from the Korean soap operas, and examined individual or cooperative influences of the emotion-related markers on emotional realisation. They discovered that some interrogative sentences play some significant role when a speaker expresses anger showing that there are some relations among such linguistic components which means that the combination of the components is useful for identifying the emphasised emotional attitudes in utterances. This study by Min and Park, is beneficial in that, it looked at direct and mainly indirect speech acts and linguistic markers which are considered in the current study thereby offering the necessary guidance on how to address these features.

Kimper (2006) conducted a study on question formation in the Karonga dialect of Tumbuka, a Bantu dialect spoken primarily in Malawi. He reveals that a question in Tumbuka is formed by the use of a question particle *kasi* which is placed at the beginning of a sentence followed by marking the final syllable with stress, and a rise in pitch. He notes that question specific rising intonation is required for yes/ no question and that the question particle placed in the initial position is always a complementiser. An example of question formation in Tumbuka is illustrated in the following statements and corresponding yes/no question below as provided by Kimper.

36. (a). Iye a- ku- gon- a

3S SM- pre –sleep -fv

‘He is sleeping’.

(b). Kasi iye a- ku- gon- a

Q 3S SM- pres- sleep- fv

‘Is he sleeping?’

(Kimper 2006: 75)

Kimper further shows in his work that Wh-subjects in Tumbuka can occur in the left and right boundaries of the clause but objects and adjuncts cannot be moved and therefore remain in-situ. He made clear that the dialect limits the occurrence of multiple Wh-words in a single sentence. Wh-subjects in embedded clauses can undergo long distance extraction, and extracted Wh-subject can move to the beginning or end of the clause requiring the question particle in clause initial position. The present study seeks to investigate the different types of interrogative

sentences including the occurrence of multiple Wh- words in a single clause as established in Kimper's work, therefore, it will benefit from Kimper's work for possible similarities and differences.

Mhlongo (2000) in a study on Zulu interrogatives identified the polar interrogatives, wh-questions, rhetoric questions, multiple wh-questions and assertive questions in Zulu, language spoken primarily in South Africa. He established that the copulative prefixing ng(i)- / y(i)- is prefixed to the nominal lexical item, or a low tone is inflected on the prefix of the subject noun when it is focused. The object noun may be focussed through the use of the emphatic determiner. He further states predicates may be focused through infixation of the present tense morpheme -ya- while when locatives are focused, emphatic determiners are employed. The study shows that mood and modality influence the interpretation of interrogatives in Zulu. Finally, the study established that semantic shift of certain linguistic units is affected by the discourse context in which they are uttered.

Caesar (2016) equally conducted a study on interrogative constructions in Dangme, a Niger Congo language primarily spoken in the eastern regions of Ghana. The aim of the study was to analyse the various means of marking interrogatives in Dangme, particularly focussing on the polar interrogatives, alternative interrogatives, affirmative and negative constituent interrogatives. The paper examined the various kinds of interrogative structures in Dangme and she identified that phonological and morpho-syntactic strategies are employed in the formation of interrogative sentences in Dangme. Caesar argue that syntactic particles such as 'anɛ, lo', 'kɛ.....kɛɛ', 'tɛ..... nɛɛ', 'mɛnɔ', 'mɛni', 'jije' among others, occur at clause initial and clause final positions. Further, when the interrogative word or phrase is placed at clause initially, there may arise a need to introduce a focus marker, nɛ or lɛ which appears immediately after the question word or phrase. The study examined constituent questions also referred to as negative WH-Constructions in the literature and discovered that they involve the use of markers; 'pi...lo', 'tse', etc. to convey negation in certain constructions. She postulates that the grammatical feature in negative question constructions could be considered as interrogative.

Cobbina (2013) in her M.Phil thesis conducted a study on question formation where she examined the strategies that are used in the formation of questions and their anticipated responses in the Efutu language spoken in the coastal areas of Ghana. It also sought to establish the relevance of focus in questions and how question intonation and question particles interact.

She categorises these question types in this language into three types based on the answers they generate: these include polar questions, content questions and alternative questions. She shows that polar questions in Efutu are formed by the use of question intonation or question particles *àà* and *ńtóó*. It was established in her study that to differentiate a declarative from a polar question in this language, question intonation is mandatory. She further observed that a particle in Efutu must not belong to any of the open classes in the language and can never be used without intonation. She also established that structurally, alternative questions can only be identified through the question intonation while the conjoined declarative is associated with the disjunctive marker *ńtóó*. She further argues that in the formation of content questions, the language employs both the *in situ* and *ex situ* strategies. Focus in Efutu language is attained by fronting the focused element in sentence initial position and tagging on with the focus marker *na*, and is used to achieve prominence and emphasis and for new information. This work is definitely relevant to the current study as it shall also seek to examine the influence of intonation and question particles in Tonga as well as investigate the relevance of focus in Tonga question formation.

Raghibdoug ((1993) in a study the interrogative construction in Persian under the auspices of the Government Binding theory explored the basic properties and the various methods of forming yes-no questions. He discovered that Persian is basically an *in-situ* language although the *wh*-phrase are free to appear anywhere including the initial position and that it uses mood attached to the question particle in the formation of yes-no questions. With regards to the movement of the *wh*-words, he concluded that this movement patterns with an optional topicalisation process, and has nothing to do with the movement to SPEC CP. The study shows that the Persian extraction patterns resemble those in Nordic languages in which no structural constraints is imposed. He argues that fronting of a *wh*-word does not involve an obligatory syntactic movement as in SPEC CP but that *wh*-fronting is an instance of optional topicalisation. Furthermore, multiple *wh*-fronting in Persian also results from adjunction of *wh*-phrases to topicalisation.

#### **2.4. Summary**

This section has reviewed some existing literature on question formation and interrogative features that obtain in some languages and it is evident from the record that in as much as there exists differences among the languages of the world on how questions are formed and

answered, the similarities are evident as well. The literature review has also revealed that there has not been much, if any, research done primarily focussing on question formation in Tonga.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework that guides the researcher in the discussion of findings for this particular study, which is the pre-occupation of the subsequent chapters. It discusses descriptive linguistics in general and also discusses the relevance and importance of the adopted theory to the present study. The theoretical framework used in this study to analyse the syntactic, morphological and semantic aspect of interrogatives in Tonga, is the Basic Linguistic Theory (BLT).

#### 3.1. A Historical Perspective of Descriptive Linguistics

Linguists generally make a distinction with regards to work that is regarded as descriptive from work that may be characterised as theoretical. To make the distinction even clearer, Francois and Ponsonnet (2013) submit that the core principle of Descriptive Linguistics (DL) is that each language constitutes an autonomous system, which must be described in its own terms. They observe that modern descriptive linguists usually carry out a detailed empirical survey on a target language and analyse the data so as to identify the components of the system and the principles that underlie its organization in a language. Descriptive linguistics is closely related to social sciences because its research agenda can be contrasted with other approaches to language study such as Anthropological Linguistics and Sociolinguistics. This is in view of the fact that, they address language issues, by interacting with cultural issues, social factors and language use. Descriptive Linguistics focusses much on the structural properties of the language themselves. A clear distinction can be made between Historical linguistics and Descriptive linguistics in that, as Francois and Ponsonnet (2013) put it, Historical linguistics studies the diachronic processes of language change, whereas Descriptive linguistics focuses on the synchronic forms taken by a particular language at a given point in its development. Typological linguistics studies language by comparing individual languages, and searches for potential universalities among the languages. Francois and Ponsonnet (2013) proposes that Descriptive linguistics should be understood as the preliminary step in the typological effort, the stage during which the facts of each individual language are established, before comparison can take place. That is to say, a description of how a language is, is first conducted by using the necessary tools needed to provide an adequate descriptions of an individual language,

before it can be compared with another that has gone through the same procedure of analysis. A language is described according to how it is found to be spoken by writing down the rules and grammar to capture the knowledge that speakers have of their language in producing speech. Andrew (2006) prescribes that a linguistic description is considered descriptively adequate if it achieves one or more of the following goals of descriptive linguistics: (i) a description of the phonology of the language in question, (ii) a description of the morphology of words belonging to that language, (iii) a description of the syntax of well-formed sentences of that language, (iv) a description of lexical derivation, and (v) a documentation of the language's vocabulary. The current undertaking's objectives are to account for the syntactic, morphological and phonological manifestation in the formation of interrogatives in Tonga. Therefore, In view of Andrew's prescription for an adequate linguistic description, and the objectives set out to be achieved in the current undertaking, the study yearns for a theory that is descriptive in nature.

It is generally assumed that the earliest known attempts to describe a language in a systematic way may have originated in ancient north western India, where there was a desire for a faithful transmission of the sacred scriptures known as the Vedas. Panini, the ancient Sanskrit scholar, is arguably regarded as the first descriptive linguist for his attempt to describe Sanskrit in around 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE. The concept of descriptivism developed and spread to other civilisations giving birth to the first grammars of Greek, Latin, Tamil, Chinese, Hebrew and Arabic. However, further development in the discovery of more linguistic diversity was fraught mainly because some languages like Latin had become so dominant that the linguistic description of other language was based on the already established categories of these prominent languages. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a departure from the old approach to language description into the so called modern linguistics. This revolution was championed by a Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure who is credited as being the father of modern linguistics. In the *cours de linguistique generale*, a collation of his lecture notes published posthumously by his students in 1916, Saussure laid out the general principles and methods of what has come to be known as descriptive linguistics. In his published collection, Saussure articulated a theory whereby a language is essentially a system of meaningful oppositions, that is, contrasts between forms are paired with contrasts between meanings. For instance, "I wash my car" and "I wash my shirt" differ by the segments "car" and "shirt"; this contrast in form corresponds to differences in meaning. In English, the meanings of car and shirt are also defined by the set of words they compare with: Car differs from shirt but also from train, scotch

cart, aeroplane. Saussure's new perspective to descriptive linguistics inspired the new methodological principle of Descriptive linguistics which proposed that each language be described on its own terms, based on the empirical observation of structures which are internal to its system, rather than on categories imported from other languages.

### **3.2. Ideologies and Approaches to Linguistic Description**

Francois and Ponsonnet (2013) propose that the first step toward describing a language is data collection. Bloomfield (1933) puts it that, linguists tend to rely on direct elicitation in data collection. In other words, a researcher carries out fieldwork in a linguistic community and record samples of speech from different speakers, embodied in different speech categories. Francois and Ponsonnet state that, naturalistic speech is the ideal when it comes to the collection of data. In line with Saussure's proposed structuralist agenda, a researcher will analyse the corpus in such a way that the language's own structures emerge from a system-internal analysis rather than being imported from another language or imposed via theoretical assumptions. In the domain of grammar, languages cannot be regarded as being the same in the way they categorise its properties. However, it is worth noting that despite the individualities that languages have, they share a lot of linguistic properties with other languages which can be compared after a thorough linguistic description of individual languages. In view of the nature of the current study, and its objectives, there arises a need to identify and engage a theoretical framework adequate to help achieves the projected goals. For this reason, the Basic Linguistic Theory (BLT) is deployed as the sole assumption in the analysis of the three descriptive tools of linguistic analysis, viz. phonological analysis (tone/intonation), morphological analysis and syntactic analysis in the formation of interrogatives in Tonga.

### **3.3. Basic Linguistic Theory (BLT)**

The framework that shall be used in this research is the Basic Linguistic Theory (BLT) as advanced by (Dixon 2012). The reason for this choice is because the study is descriptive in nature and BLT provides a better platform for a descriptive analysis. The origins of this theory can be traced from the initial work of Sanskrit and Greek Grammarians about 2000 to 3000 years ago and continues to be improved with time as new languages are described. The main focus of this theory is on grammar writing and it describes grammar as the central part of every language. It provides a guide for linguists working on natural languages and shows that each language should be treated as unique. Basic linguistic theory as a descriptive theoretical framework, focuses on how the language is organized and why languages are the way they are.

The theory is widely employed in language description, because it provides a flexible and analytic framework in terms of which the grammar of any language can be described. This theory is not a formal one, however, it has been influenced by certain formal theories, e.g. by generative grammar. Within the frame of basic linguistic theory, the language is analysed as a system in its own right via data collected with a minimum of preconceptions about the language. It differs from traditional grammar most strikingly in its attempt to describe each language in its own terms, rather than trying to force the language into a model based on European languages (Dryer 2005:201). Dixon (2012a) elucidates that the grammar of any language is a network of collaborating structures and types, and calls for comparison of similar phenomena between languages before predictions are made. This means that each language is first studied in isolation before it is related to what obtains across the languages of the world. This prevents the temptation to place assumptions that might be true to a certain language on another language. Dixon treats linguistics as a natural science and explains that being a science, linguistic analysis of a language must go through the scientific processes of describing, explaining, predicting, and evaluating, and this is not strange to BLT.

Dixon (2012a:92) argues that there are no two languages that are the same, therefore, unlike other formal theories that have a framework that is used to match the elements of the theory to a language, BLT does not make universal claims but provide basic linguistic features and parameters that are common to be drawn on as correct in writing a particular language's grammar. Dixon (2012a) further explains how various aspects of grammar including the interrogative sentence should be investigated in a language. Data analysis in BLT is done by looking at similarities in structures through comparison. Because the theory views every language as a system that is unique and every part relates to the whole, the use of the theory provides a feedback to the theory so that it can be refined and extended. Dixon further argues that any grammatical description must be grouped into words and clause. The word refers to "the interaction of syntax and morphology" and the Clause refers to the description of some activity, state, or property and it is contained in a sentence. Thus, a simple sentence is made of a single finite clause with a finite verb that is independent.

Structurally, there are two main clauses found in the languages of the world. These are independent and dependent clause where an independent clause can stand alone as a complete sentence while the dependent clause depends on the independent clause to constitute any meaning. The clause has two functions which are syntactic and pragmatic. The syntactic

function deals with the structure, word ordering and clause combination while the pragmatic function is done by indicating the type of speech act that an utterance is. These types include a statement that has a declarative mood, e.g. “the examination has not yet been written”, a command with an imperative mood, and a question with an interrogative mood, however, this is marked by specific appropriate intonation contour to achieve an appearance of a question, e.g. “the examination has not yet been written?” – By placing a rising intonation on the final word, it marks the clause as a question that demands a yes/no response. Clauses have internal structure made up of a predicate and a number of arguments which should be stated or understood from context. The predicate is the nucleus of the clause and determines the type and number of arguments that the clause takes and the meaning of the predicate determines the kinds of nouns which can fill a core argument slot. In view of the aforementioned concepts, it is worth noting that the primary goal of work in basic linguistic theory is descriptive, without any intended theoretical significance. Using this theory to study interrogatives, shall assist in identifying and describing the interrogative types in Tonga. Secondly, Dixon deals with the notion of word order and how it is employed in describing how the arguments in the clause are encoded. This notion in Tonga interrogatives is earmarked for investigation, thereby providing relevant guidance. This theory will guide in providing an accurate description of the interrogative clause in Tonga.

### **3.4. Summary**

This chapter has outlined the theoretical frameworks used in this research. It has discussed the theory used and showed also the relevance of the reviewed data to the present study. The choice of this theoretical framework was so that an accurate description of interrogatives in Tonga was achieved given the objectives of the current study. In particular, the theoretical framework will guide the study in understanding the morphological aspects of interrogatives markers, their syntactic distributions, and some aspects of phonology as well as the manifestation of semantics in interrogative constructions within the broader context of the Tonga grammar without taking anything for granted: that is to mean, as borrowed from Dixon’s words, “each analytic decision has to be approached as an open question” (1997:132).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODOLOGY

#### 4.0 Introduction

The current chapter focuses on the methodology employed in this research. It provides the steps that were taken to conduct the current research in its quest to obtain the objectives that were set in the onset and ultimately produced the findings that are discussed in the subsequent chapters. The chapter is structured in such a way that, it begins by elucidating the research design hired and finally explains in detail the methods and techniques used in data collection and analysis.

#### 4.1. Research Design

According to De Vaus (2001), a research design refers to the overall strategy that you choose to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring you will effectively address the research problem; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. Parahoo (1997:142), simply describes research design as, “a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analysed”. This implies that the research design will serve as a guide on how data should be collected and analysed. Therefore, the type of research methodology was largely determined by nature of the research problems to be addressed. In view of the research problem that the current study sought to resolve, the qualitative approach was adopted. This was because of its appropriateness in social research, and the fact that it can be applied in the subjects’ natural environment as opposed to the quantitative study which is more of a laboratory-proved research that best works for researching natural matter, with behaviour which is predictable. In addition, the rationale behind the choice of the qualitative approach is centred on its strengths and the fact that it asks the question, ‘what is going on?’ the concentration of this study as it seeks to establish what goes on in the formation of interrogatives in Tonga. It is also flexible in that it emphasises people’s lived experiences, their perceptions, their assumptions and their presuppositions as connected to the world around them (Neumann, 2006). Qualitative approach is defined by Morrison (1989:24), as a descriptive research tradition for things that cannot be instrumentally measured, such as feelings, behaviour, speech, thoughts and culture. Researchers who use this approach adopt a person centred wholistic and humanistic perspective to understand human lived experiences without focussing on the specific concepts (Field &

Morse 1996:8). This essentially suggests that the researcher will focus on the experiences of the participants' perspective of the subject. This however, does not ostracise the researcher to a point where they cannot add to the uniqueness of the data collection and analysis. The qualitative approach is therefore suitable for this language based research since the researcher collected data right from the participants and also in settings that are not controlled. In this study, the researcher collected data from native Tonga speakers, who are also secondary school teachers of the Tonga language and focused on the techniques employed in the interrogative constructions in Tonga.

Qualitative research sometimes adopts bracketing, a process that aims to improve and reduce bias in research. Parahoo (1997:45) defines bracketing as, "suspension of the researcher's preconceptions, prejudices, and beliefs so that they do not interfere with or influence the participant's experience". It was virtually impossible for the researcher to adopt bracketing because of the preconceptions, and assumptions about the research topic resulting from the fact that the researcher is a native speaker of the language under study. However, this was addressed by writing down all the preconceptions and assumption about the topic at the beginning of the study, only to be used for self-reflection and external review, and so as to maintain an open approach during consultation with the participants, and during the analysis of data.

## **4.2 Sampling**

### **4.2.1 Study area and Sample size**

The study was conducted in Choma district of the Southern province of Zambia because it is home to plateau Tonga speaking people. Choma is located 285 km by road from Lusaka the capital of Zambia and about 190 km from Livingstone, the nation's tourist capital. Polit et al (1997:234) define a sample as, "a proportion of a population". A carefully selected sample can provide data representative of the population from which it is drawn. Holloway and Wheeler (2002:128) note that, the sample size does not influence the importance or quality of the study. In view of this assertion, the current study included only 5 informants who met the sampling criteria that could provide accurate and sufficient data that is representative of the target population. These participants constituted a cohort of key informants who are native speakers of the language as well as teachers of the language in secondary schools. The five informants were selected from three secondary schools within Choma town, where they teach the Tonga

language; namely, Swan, Chuundu and Choma Day Secondary schools. The role of the informants in the study was to provide the needed grammatical judgement of the interrogative constructions in Tonga.

#### **4.2.2 Sampling Technique**

Polit et al (2001:134) describe sampling as a process in which, “a portion that represents the whole population is selected”...a practise that almost amounts to generalisation of findings. Furthermore, the population of interest as defined by Frankel and Wallen (2016) is typically a group of persons who possess a certain characteristic or a set of characteristics. A sample is a group of people or events drawn from a population. A research study may be carried out on a sample population or the whole population. The goal is to be able to find out true facts about the sample that will also be true of the whole population. In order for the sample to truly reflect the population, you need to have a sample that is representative of the population. Depending on the type of study being conducted, the best method to use to obtain a representative sample is to randomly select your sample from the population. A study that has a large, randomly selected sample or a carefully matched sample is said to have external validity (Kombo and Denzin, 2006). In this study, the purposeful sampling method was used and it selected only 5 native speakers who are teachers of the target language. This choice was made because the researcher was concerned with the relevance of the sample in the sense that, the native speakers of Tonga who are also teachers of the Tonga language in secondary schools were best suited to provide reliable data. This is simply because, by virtue of their qualification as teachers of the language, they had the advantage of providing accurate grammatical transformations of interrogative constructions from declarative sentences. The research project was explained to the selected prospective participants who were on the shortlist and they were asked in person if they were willing and comfortable to participate in the research. The criteria for their selection was explained to the participants.

#### **4.3 Research Techniques and Instruments**

Individual face to face unstructured interviews were used. The rationale for choosing this method was to ensure that the researcher captures the correct marking of stress and tone in the interrogative constructions that were provided by the respondents. A list of declarative sentences in Tonga were administered to the 5 informants for which they were required to transform into interrogative sentences. The declarative sentences were categorised in such a

manner that the expected responses would represent the polar, constituent, and alternative interrogatives as they occur in Tonga. A tape recorder and a note book was also used for the purpose of recording the actual marking of stress and intonation. During the data collection, the researcher pocketed their preconceived assumptions about interrogative constructions in Tonga so as to ensure that credible data were collected. The participants were not guided on the expected outcome but were allowed to provide data by their own understanding and familiarity with the language.

#### **4.3.1. Secondary data**

The data were collected from published and unpublished data sources that included documents from previously submitted dissertations, journals, magazines and book on interrogative formation at The University of Zambia library. The data collected from the University library was important in the sense that the phenomena under investigation is not only unique to Tonga but obtains in almost all languages of the world. Introspection was also used in data collection because the researcher is a native speaker of Tonga.

#### **4.3.2. Primary Data**

The data were collected by way of conducting face to face unstructured interviews as well as administering of a list of declaratives that were to be transformed into interrogatives.

### **4.4 Data Collection Procedures**

Data collection was undertaken over a period of one month. The researcher identified the key informants for the study and subjected them to word and sentence list which they provided data accordingly. Since the researcher is a native speaker of the language, some data were provided by him.

### **4.5 Data Analysis**

Data analysis started during data collection. In particular, Basic Linguistic Theory (BLT) was deployed as an analytical theory. The three structural (descriptive) tools of language /linguistic analysis, viz. phonological analysis (tone/intonation), morphological analysis and syntactic analysis were applied in order to account for the structural as well as semantic manifestations of interrogative constructions in Tonga.

#### **4.6 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher wrote to the District Education Board Secretary seeking permission to conduct a research in the District. Once permission was granted the researcher introduced himself to the respondents explaining clearly the purpose of the research.

#### **4.7 Summary**

This chapter reviews the methodology that the study engaged. The study area has been revealed as Choma town of the Southern Province in Zambia. The key informants included 5 teachers of the language under study. The chapter states that study employed the qualitative approach. Under scrutiny were declarative sentences as a foundation in the formation of the three types of interrogative structures in Tonga. Finally, the chapter has outlined the procedures used to analyse the data gathered and the justification for using the said procedures.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 5.0. Introduction

The previous chapter provided details of the methodology used to collect and analyse data in order to answer the research questions raised in chapter one of this study. The present chapter presents the research findings based on the research objectives outlined in the onset of this study. The objectives of this study were: To provide a taxonomy of interrogative particles in Tonga: account for the morphology of interrogatives and focus in Tonga: establish the syntactic distribution of the interrogative markers in Tonga: and to examine the manifestation of phonology and semantics in the formation of interrogatives in Tonga. The findings are presented and discussed in categories and subcategories of the three types of interrogatives that occur in Tonga, namely, polar interrogatives, constituent interrogatives and the alternative interrogatives. For the sake of this presentation, the morphophonological process of derivation or semi vocalisation will not be shown here. This is in the case of /w/ which is the product of the semi vocalisation of /u/, a high back vowel which changes to /w/ when followed by /a/ or /e/ as in mwaka ‘year’ and also in the case of /y/ which is formed when the high vowel /i/ is followed by /a/, /e/, /o/, and /u/ as in lya ‘eat’, myezi ‘months’, zyonse ‘all of them’, and zyuuka ‘ants’.

#### 5.1. Taxonomy of Interrogative particles in Tonga

As one of the study’s objectives, the subsequent subsections will present the interrogative particles as they occur in the three interrogative types identified in Tonga.

##### 5.1.1. Polar interrogative Particles in Tonga

Table 5.1.1 below presents the interrogative particles that emerge in Tonga and their gloss.

Interrogative Particles	Gloss
Hena	Did/Are you.....?
Tee	Is it not the case that?
Na	Is it not so?
Tonal particles	

Polar interrogatives are interrogative sentences or constructions whose primary use is in asking questions to be answered ‘yes’ or ‘no’. The interrogative particles above are used to form these interrogative sentences from declaratives as shown in examples below.

**37. a. Hena**

(i). Hena          ulamuyanda                  or          ulamuyanda                  hena?  
 INTW-Do      2SG-you want him/her      or      2SG-you want him/her      INTW-Do  
 ‘Do you love him/her?’

(ii). Hena          nkoli?  
 INTW-Are      2SG-You there  
 ‘Are you there?’

**b. Tee**

(i). Tee                          ngu                          wakamujaya?  
 INTW- is it not      3SG-him/her      who killed him/her  
 ‘Is it not him/her who killed him/her?’

(ii). Tee                          ngu                          yanda?  
 INTW- is it not      3SG-him/her      that wants  
 ‘Is it not him/her that wants?’

**c. Na**

(i). Ulaboola                          na?  
 2SG-you are coming      aren’t you  
 ‘You are coming, aren’t you?’

(ii). Ulasobana                          na?  
 2SG-you are kidding      aren’t you  
 ‘You are kidding, aren’t you?’

#### d. Tonal particles

(i). Ula' bo'o'la'?

3SG-is he/she coming

'Is he/she coming?'

(ii). Ta' bo'oli'?

3SG-he/she is not not coming

'Is he/she not coming?'

(iii). To' ya'ndi'?

2SG-don't you not want

'Don't you want?'

#### 5.1.2. Constituent Interrogative Particles in Tonga

Table 5.1.2. below shows constituent interrogative particles in Tonga and the glosses.

Interrogative Word/ Phrase	Gloss
Buti	How
(Ku)li	Where (at, to)
(Mu)li	Where (in)
(Aa)li	Where (on, at)
Cili	Which
Lili	When
Nkaambo nzi/ kai/nzi	Why
Ni	Who
Nzi	What

Constituent interrogatives demand that the addressee provide extra information that allows them to complete the interpretation of the proposition. The interrogative words and phrases above are used in Tonga to form such type of interrogative. Consider the examples below.

**38. a. Buti**

(i). Uli            bonya        buti?

3SG-he/she    looks like    INTW-how

‘How does he/she look?’

(ii). Ba            le            enda        buti            kuya            kucikombelo?

3PL-they    SC        go        INTW-how    going            to church

‘How will they go to church?’

**b. (i). Kuli**

Ba            kkala        kuli?

3PL-they    stay        INTW-where (at)

‘Where do they stay?’

Wa            zwa            kuli?

2SG-you    come from    INTW-where (from)

‘Where are you coming from?’

**(ii). Muli**

Wa            kaabika        muli            imali?

2SG-you    PST-put    INTW-where (in)    the money

‘Where (in) did you put the money?’

Yanjila            muli            inzoka?

It entered    INTW-where (in)        the snake

‘Where (in) did the snake enter?’

**(iii). Aali**

Ma key        amootokala    ali        aali?

The key for the car are INTW-where (on)

‘Where (on) are the car keys?’

Inganda yakwe ili aali?

The house 3SG-for him/her is INTW-where (at)

‘Where (at) is his/her house?’

### c. Cili

(i). Uyanda cibulo cili?

2SG-you want metal INTW-which

‘Which metal do you want?’

(ii). Cili cuuno nchakatyola?

INTW-which chair that he/she broke

‘Which chair did he/she break?’

### d. Lili

(i). Baya kujoka lili?

3PL-they are coming back INTW-when

‘When will they come back?’

(ii). Ilili naakafwa?

INTW-it is when that he/she died

‘It is when that he/she died?’

### e. Nzi

(i). Nkaambo nzi nchaboolela kuno?

INTW-why did he/she come for here

‘For what reason did he/she come here?’

(ii). Ino mulwanina nzi?

2PL-you are fighting for INTW-for what reason

‘You are fighting for what?’

(ii). Ino kai nchomumina?

INTW-for what reason have you beaten him/her

‘Why have you beaten him/her?’

### **f. Ni**

(i). Uyanda ni?

2SG-you want INTW-who

‘Who do you want?’

(ii). Nguni ngoyanda?

INTW-who that 2SG-you want

‘It is who that you want?’ (Who do you want?)

(iii). Mbaani ba ibweza jamba?

INTW-who/3PL SC go plough

‘Who are they that got the plough?’ (Who got the plough?)

(iv). Njabani ngombe eeyi?

INTW-whose cow this

‘It is for who this cow?’ (Whose cow is this for?)

### **g. Nzi**

(i). U yanda nzi?

2SG-you want INTW-what

‘What do you want?’

(ii). Nchinzi ncho yanda?

INTW-what that 2SG-you want

‘It is what that you want?’

(iii). Wa likuyandaula nzi munganda?

2SG-you looking for INTW-what in the house

‘What were you looking for in the house?’

### 5.1.3. Alternative Disjunctive Interrogative Particles

Table 5.1.3 below presents alternative disjunctive interrogative particles and the glosses as they manifest in Tonga.

Disjunctive Particles	Gloss
Naanka	Or
Na	Or
Na pe	Or not

Alternative interrogatives are similar to polar interrogatives in that they present possible answers also, but the variation is in the fact that alternative interrogative answers are provided and are introduced through a disjunction rather than through a *wh-* question word. Alternative interrogatives in Tonga are formed by using disjunctive question particles *naanka*, *na* or *na pe* ‘or’ which are placed between two alternative clauses expressed in the question as shown in examples below.

#### 39. a. Naanka

(i). Hena u yanda nganda naanka mootokala?

INTW-do 2SG-you want a house DP-or a car

‘Do you want a house or a car?’

(ii). Ula sala cili; buumi naanka lufu?

2SG-you will choose INTW-which life DP-or death

‘Which will you choose; life or death?’

## **b. Na**

(i). Ba            yanda            kucita    buti:    koonā    na        kweenda?

3PL-they    PRES- want    to do    how    to sleep    DP-or    to go

‘What do they want to do: to sleep or to go?’

(ii). Tulide            limwi            na        tweende        buyo?

1PL-we should eat    in advance    DP-or    we go        just

‘Should we eat in advance or we just go?’

(iii). Uyanda        ndime        na        ooyu?

2SG-you want    me    DP-or    DEM-this one

‘You want me or this one?’

## **c. Na pe**

(i). Ulayanda        kulya            na pe            toyandi?

2SG-you want    PRES-to eat    DP-or not    2SG-you don’t want

‘Do you want to eat or not you don’t want?’

(ii). Tucibweze            na pe?

1PL-should we get it    DP-or not

‘Should we get it or not?’

## **5.2. The Morphology and Phonology of Interrogative Particles in Tonga**

### **5.2.1. Tonga Polar Interrogatives**

In Tonga, tonal particles and interrogative word particles are used as strategies in the formation of polar interrogatives. The following subsections elaborates further on these strategies.

### 5.2.1.1. Tonal Particles

Unlike English, Tonga, does not distinguish ‘yes-no’ questions grammatically from statements by use of subject-verb inversion technique. Instead, polar interrogatives in Tonga are marked by raising the pitch on all the syllables of the declarative sentence with or without interrogative particles. The examples in Tonga below demonstrate the intonation pattern.

40. (a).	Wa	ka	fwa	(Statement)
	SIG -He/She	PT-	die	
	Wa'	ka'	fwa?	(Question)
	‘He died?’			
(b).	Ba	ka	andana	(Statement)
	PL-They	PT-ed	parted	
	Ba'	ka'	andana?	(Question)
	‘They separated?’			
(c).	Wa	ka	lya	(Statement)
	SIG-You/He/She	PT-ed	eat	
	Wa'	ka'	lya?	(Question)
	‘You ate?’			
(d).	To	yandi	kulya.	(Statement)
	NEG-Do SIG-you/He/She	PRES-want	PRES-to eat	
	To'	yandi'	kulya'?	(Question)
	‘You don’t want to eat?’			

Example (40) demonstrates the formation of an interrogative from a declarative sentence by means of raising the intonation. From the data presented, in each example, the statement is typically spoken with falling intonation while the question is characteristically spoken with



verb to mark for tense and number. Example (42) and (43), shows the negative polar interrogative in Tonga.

42. Hena                      to      yandi              kulya?

QP-do      2SG-NEG    want              to eat?

‘Don’t you want to eat?’

43. Hena                      ta                      ba                      yandi              kulya?

QP-Do      3SG-NEG              PL-they              want              to eat?

‘Don’t they want to eat?’

### 5.2.2. Tonga Constituent Interrogatives

In addressing the second objective which sought to account for the morphology and phonology of interrogatives in Tonga, we turn to data on constituent interrogatives in Tonga. To recap, as shown in the literature, all known human Languages have a set of interrogative words or phrases that are characteristic of constituent interrogatives. These interrogative words or phrases typically belong to different categories which may include among others, interrogative pronouns, interrogative adverbs, interrogative adjectives, and interrogative verbs. As shown from the data collected and analysed, in the formation of constituent interrogatives, Tonga uses both interrogative words and phrases. These interrogative words and phrases are two level morphemes; bound and free morphemes.

#### 5.2.2.1. Ni      ‘Who’ (Whom, Whose)

Ni is a Tonga interrogative word that is used in reference to human when seeking the identity of the subject or the object of the clause. The interrogative word can take the form of singularity or plurality depending on the nature of the subject and object of the clause. When used in the singular sense, *ni* is realised as *nguni* by adding the prefix *ngu-* to the root word *-ni* and when used in the plural sense, it is realised as *mbaani* by adding a prefix *mba-* to the root *-ni*. A subject and object concord element is placed after the interrogative word for the purpose of agreement. Thus, when it is the subject being questioned, a subject concord element is attached to the verb for the purpose of agreement with the interrogative word with regards to singularity and plurality. Examples given below.



Example (44) shows the usage of *ni* in Tonga which is inherently singular. However, when the interrogative word is used in the plural sense, an affix *mba-* is attached to the root *ni* to form *mbaani* which shows that the human referent whose identity is being sought, is more than just one as shown in example (47.a.ii). When used in the formation of possessive constructions, the interrogative word changes form by attaching a phrasal affix to the root *-ni*. The word becomes *ngwaani* ‘He/she is for who’ for the singular human referent and *nchicani* ‘it is for who’ for singular inanimate referent. The form *njaani* ‘whose’ and *zyaani* ‘whose or they are for who’ for inanimate referents. This formation is shown in example (48).

48. a. Ngwaani	mu	kaintu	ooyu?
INTP-she/he is for who	1SG-she	wife	this-DEM
‘Whose wife is this?’			
b. Nchicani	cuuno	eeci?	
INTP-it is for who	SG-chair	this-DEM	
‘Whose chair is this?’			
c. Zyaani	ngombe	eezyi?	
INTP-They are for who	cows	these-DEM	
‘Whose cows are these?’			

For every speech situation, be it to enquire about persons, things, and time, there is an interrogative form that is used for this purpose in Tonga. Lindström (1995) and Ultan (1978) argue that if a language differentiates the interrogative categories of person and thing, then the interrogative words show either a human/nonhuman or an animate/inanimate contrast. Tonga is one of such language that makes such a distinction with regards to noun classes.

### 5.2.2.2 Li ‘Where’

The interrogative *li* ‘where’ is used to inquire about the location of the subject or the object of the sentence that the speaker is uncertain of. This interrogative word accounts for both spatial (asks for the space position of a given entity) and also the directional movements. To achieve this, the morpheme *-li* is attached with prefix particles: *ku-* to form *kuli* ‘where (at, to)’, *mu-*



### 5.2.2.3 Buti ‘How’

The interrogative word *buti* ‘how’ is a free morpheme which stands independently to question how an action is performed. This interrogative requests the hearer to define certain manner characteristics of a given event/action as demonstrated below.

53. Wa ka enda buti?

You-2SG did-PST move INTW-how

‘How did you move?’

54. Wa ka I yaka buti nganda?

She/he-2SG did-PST it-OC build INTW-how OBJ-house

‘How did he/she build the house?’

### 5.2.2.4 Nzi/ Kai ‘why’

In the formation of constituent interrogatives that seek for the reason, purpose or motive of an action, Tonga uses the interrogative particle *nzi* ‘why’. *Nzi* is sometimes attached to the verb reason to form *nkaambo nzi* ‘for what reason’ which is also used to form this interrogative type. In other instances, *kai* is used to ask the question why.

55. Nkaambo nzi nco kuli bantu banji?

INTP-reason what COP-is there people many

‘Why is there many people?’

56. Wa mumina nzi?

2SG-You have beaten him/her INTW-why

‘Why have you beaten him/her?’

57. Ino kai nchoomutandila?

But why 1SG-have you chased him/her

‘But why have you chased him/her?’

### 5.2.2.5 Lili ‘When’

The interrogative word *lili* ‘when’ is used in Tonga in the formation of constituent interrogatives that seek to inquire about time; at what time, and upon which occasion or circumstance that an action or event takes place. It is a free morpheme that can stand alone as sentence in a conversation.

58. Wa            ka            sika            lili?  
2SG-he/she    did-PST    arrive    INTW-when  
‘When did she/he arrive?’

59. Wa            ka            sika            lili            okuno?  
2SG-you        did-PST    arrive    INTW-when    LOC-here  
‘When did you arrive here?’

### 5.2.2.6 Cili ‘Which’

The interrogative word ‘which’ has the stem *-li* which is attached with different affixes for different referents. To ask for information specifying one inanimate noun such as a thing, the prefix *ci-* is attached to the stem to form *cili* ‘which’. In instances of selecting animate singular nouns like animals or house the form is *ili* ‘which’ is used by attaching the affix *i-* to the stem. These forms of interrogative word serves the purpose of a selective interrogative by requesting the hearer to choose a referent from a closed and contextually determined set of alternatives. When there is need to specify more than one thing, the prefix *zy-* is attached to the stem *-li* to form the plural form *Zyili* ‘which’. This interrogative word occupies the in-situ position immediately after the direct object of the sentence.

60. Ndi            bweze            cuuno            cili?  
1SG-I            should get    SG-chair    INTW-which  
‘Which chair should I get?’

61. U            yanda            kubweza            ngome            ili?

1SG-you want to get cow INTW-which

‘Which cow do you want to get?’

Ba kkala munganda ili?

3PL-They stay in house INTW-which

‘Which house do they live in?’

62. Tu la kala zyuuno zyili?

1PL-we COP-should sit PL-chairs INTW-which

‘Which chairs should we sit on?’

Example (60) shows the use of the interrogative word *cili* ‘which’ in the sentence in which the speaker seeks to know the particular chair that they should get while (61) demonstrates an instance of selecting a single animate object such as a cow, wherein the speaker requires the hearer to state by way of choice which cow from the contextually determined alternatives. Example (62) shows the plural form of the interrogative stem *-li* which is *zyili* wherein the addressee is required to give information on which chairs the speaker should sit.

#### 5.2.2.7 Nzi ‘What’

The particle *-nzi* is used to ask information about people or things. The interrogative *nzi* is principally used with verbs, that is, immediately after. It is also used in a general sort of way with the prefix particles *nci-* when asking questions about things such as *ncinzi* ‘What kind is it?’ or with prefix particle *zyi-* to show plurality as in *zyinzi* ‘They are what’. Observe examples (63-66).

63. Wa ka chita nzi?

He/she did-PST do INTW-what

‘What did she/he do?’

64. Nci            indi            nzi?  
 It is            time            INTW-what

‘What time is it?’

65. Nci            nzi            nco            yanda?  
 It is            INTW-what            that you            want

‘What do you want?’

66. Zyi                            nzi            ezyi?  
 3PL-They are            INTW-what            these

‘What are these?’

The examples demonstrates the use of the interrogative *nzi* where the speaker inquires on what the addressee did as in (63) and on what time it was when the speaker made the inquiry as in (64). Example (65) and (66) shows the form *ncinzi* ‘it is what’ and *zyinzi* ‘They are what’ which are formed by attaching the prefix *nci-* and *zyi-* to the interrogative *nzi* ‘what’ respectively.

### 5.3 The Syntax of Interrogatives in Tonga

#### 5.3.1 Tonga Polar Interrogatives

According to the data gathered, the placement of the interrogative particle in Tonga is variable in that the particle can occur in two positions: in the sentence initial or final position with the initial position being dominant.

##### 5.3.1.1 Polar Interrogative Particle

The particles ‘*hena*’, ‘*na*’ and ‘*tee*’ are syntactically used to mark polar interrogatives in Tonga. They can be placed either in the initial or final position of the sentence during the formation of this interrogative type except for the particle ‘*na*’ which can only occur in the final position of the sentence. Consider examples below. Since the analysis has already been done in the

sections above, the details will not be shown here save to show the syntactic distribution or mobility of the interrogative particle in sentences. For ease of identification, the particles have been italicised.

67. Hena wakamusala Jesu? Or Wakamusala Jesu *hena*?

‘Have you chosen Jesus?’

68. Uyanda kuumwa *tee*? Or *Tee* uyanda kuumwa?

‘Is it not the case that you want to be beaten?’

69. Ulayanda kukwatwa na?

‘Do you want to get married?’

The interrogative particle ‘*hena*’ and ‘*tee*’ have been used both in the initial and final position and still maintain grammaticality but the particle ‘*na*’ can only be used in the final position.

### 5.3.1.2 Focus in Polar Interrogatives

From the data collected and analysed, there are three types of focus that manifest in Tonga when a speaker seeks to acquire confirmation or denial of a supposition, and it is placed after the element with which the speaker has some uncertainty and attaches a tonal marker. The particle in Tonga that is used to mark focus is ‘*na*’ and it placed directly following the element focused. In some instances, it is possible to use a pronoun to mark focus. The high tone that accompanies this particle is attached to it.

#### 5.3.1.2.1. Subject focus

Subject focus is a type of focus in which the subject of the sentence is given prominence. In Tonga, the subject of the sentence is focused by placing the focus particle ‘*na*’ immediately after the subject as shown in example (70) in which the speaker presupposes that the meat was eaten and thereby seeks confirmation from the addressee that it is indeed John who ate the meat. It is possible to use a pronoun marked with grammatical number immediately after the subject to mark focus as shown in example (71).

70. Hena	walya	nyama	ngu	Joni	na?
QP	eaten	meat	2SG-it is	SUBJ-John	FOC

‘Is it John who ate the meat?’

71. Joni	walo	ngu	walya	nyama	hena?
SUBJ-John	PRN-him	2SG-it is	PT-eaten	Meat	QP

Literally: ‘John him it is that ate the meat is it?’

‘Is it John who ate the meat?’

### 5.3.1.2.2. Object focus

Object focus is a type of focus in which the object of the sentence is given prominence. The element in the object position in Tonga is focused by placing the same focus particle used in Subject focus ‘*na*’, immediately after the object of the sentence whose truth value a speaker wishes to question. In example (72), the noun meat acting as an object of the sentence is focused by placing the focus particle immediately after it, in a dialogue in which the speaker seeks to confirm if the meat is what John actually ate, and not any other thing. The punctuation with a comma in the example is important because it shows an obligatory pause that specifically directs the focus on the object *nyama*. It is important to note also that tone marking on the focus particle is vital in achieving focus in Tonga.

72. Hena	ni	nyama	na,	Joni	njaalya?
QP-is it	3CI-it is	OBJ-meat	FOC	SUBJ-John	PST-eat

‘Is it meat that John ate?’

### 5.3.1.2.3. Verb focus

Verbs in Tonga are marked for focus using the same focus construction used to mark subject and object focus. The focus particle ‘*na*’ is placed immediately after the verbal constituent to be focused. In example (73), the focus particle is placed immediately after the verb element *nkulya* and the particle is also marked with an extra high tone marker.

73. Hena	nku	lya	na,	nkwa	yanda	Joni?
QP-is it	to	VB-eat	FOC	that 3SG-he/she	want	SUBJ-John

‘Is it eating that John wants?’

#### 5.3.1.2.4. Focus marking of Adjuncts

Focus for adjuncts is marked the same way as other constituents of a sentence. Adjuncts marked for focus are usually adverbs of time and place which basically give us more information about the verb of the sentence. In example (74), the focus marker particle ‘*na*’ is placed directly after the adverb of time *sunu* ‘today’ which is being focused, and an extra high tone marker attached to the particle.

74. Hena	ndi	sunu	na,	na	kwata?
QP-is it	it is	ADV-today	FOC	that2SG-she/he	marry

‘Is it today that he marries?’

#### 5.3.2. Tonga Constituent Interrogative Particles

Most of the interrogative words or phrases used in the formation of constituent interrogatives in Tonga can occur both in the ex-situ and in-situ position depending on the type of interrogative word or phrase to be used. Example (75) and (76), demonstrates the two structures created by the two possible strategies.

75. a. Nguni	wa	lya	nyama?
INTP-it is who	SC-who	ate	meat?

‘Who ate the meat?’

b. Wa	lya	nyama	nguni?
SC-who	eat	meat	INTP-it is who

‘Who ate the meat?’

76. U	zwa	kuli?
1SG-you are	INF-coming	INTW-where

Literally: You are coming from where?

‘Where are you coming from?’



In Example (78), *kai* ‘why’ occurs in the penultimate or mid position of the sentence. Dryer (2005) has argued that, when the interrogative word occurs in the same position as corresponding non-interrogative phrases or words, they are sometimes described as occurring in the in-situ position. Therefore, the interrogative word in example (78a) is regarded as occurring in-situ and as revealed in (78b), it cannot occupy the initial position because the sentence will be rendered ungrammatical. Even though the addressee may understand the question in example (79b), the sentence is ungrammatical.

### 5.3.2.1. Focus in Tonga Constituent Interrogatives

Matic (2013) defines focus as a strategy in which a speaker uses an element in a sentence to code information that is desired to be prominent for the sake of understanding what is being communicated or being implied. Focus in Tonga is characterised by the fronting of the interrogatives in exception of *nkaambo nzi* ‘why’ which obligatorily already occurs in the initial position of the sentence. The examples below show focus in constituent interrogative achieved by fronting of some interrogative words.

80. Kuli                      nkwa              ka      ijana              ntobolo?

INTW-**Where**              did he/she      PST      find              gun

‘Where did he/she find the gun?’

81. Cili                      cisani              nca              ka      bweza?

INTW-**Which**              clothe              did he/she      PST      get

‘Which clothe did he get?’

82. Lili                      naka              ziminna?

INTW-**When**              did he/she      die

‘When did he/she die?’

83. Ncinzi                      ncali                      ku      yanda?

INTW-**It is what**              that he/she              SC      want

Literally: It is what that he wanted?

‘What did he want?’

The examples (80-83) above show focus in constituent interrogatives achieved by fronting the interrogative words to the initial position of the sentence and assigning of a high pitch tone to the interrogative words. Ordinarily, the above interrogative words occur in-situ in the formation of constituent interrogatives in Tonga, but for the purpose of focus, they occur in the ex-situ position accompanied with a high pitch tone so as to show the specific information of interest of the speaker by making that particular constituent prominent in an utterance. This kind of focus is used mainly for clarification. When unsolicited information is given and the addressee is shocked by or unclear with the details, he then reacts to the information by asking a question with the interrogative word fronted to the initial position of the sentence; usually to show displeasure with the information given. This scenario is demonstrated below in (84).

84. a. Ba ushi Luyanga ba kabweza keembe.

HON-he/she father for Luyanga SC has taken axe

‘Luyanga’s father has taken the axe.’

#### **Reaction**

b. Ncinzi nca bweza?

INTW-it is what he/she has taken

‘What has he/she taken?’

### **5.3.3. Alternative Interrogatives**

In the formation of alternative interrogatives in Tonga, the disjunctive question particle *naanka*, *na*, and *na pe* ‘or’ are used to join the expressed alternatives depending on the context of the question. There are many strategies employed in the formation of alternative interrogatives in the languages of the world. Some of the strategies that are employed in the formation of this interrogative type in Tonga are discussed in the subsequent subsections of this chapter.

#### **5.3.3.1. The Morphology and Syntax of Tonga Alternative Interrogatives Particles**

In the formation of this interrogative type, Tonga uses three syntactic strategies together with the three disjunctive question particles. The strategies are presented below.

### 5.3.3.1.1 Two independent clauses

One of the strategies used in Tonga is to join two independent clauses that have the same syntactic structure. The question particle used in the formation of this type of alternative interrogative is *na* ‘or’. Consider example (85-88) below.

85. U           yanda       nshima    na    u        yanda    musozya?  
2SG-You       want       nshima    or 2SG-you   want       samp

‘Do you want nshima or do you want samp?’

86. Hena       Joni           ulaiya    na    u            labeleka?  
QP- Is        SUBJ-John   learning   or   SUBJcord-he   is working

‘Is John learning or he is working?’

87. Hena        ula               limina   na        ula        bika        musamu?  
QP-Are 2SG-you going to   weed   or    you will   put        medicine

‘Are you going to weed or you will put medicine?’

88. Hena       Ba        yanda    mali    na        ba        yanda    kulilekelela?  
QP-Do 3PL-They   want    money   or        they    want    an apology?

‘Do they want money or they want an apology?’

Example (85), contains two independent clauses that have been joined with the disjunctive marker *na* ‘or’. The addressee is questioned on whether they want to eat nshima (a staple meal in Zambia) or they want to eat samp as represented by the first clause and the second clause respectively. Both clauses have the transitive verbs *yanda* ‘want’ that requires objects such as nshima and samp. What is worth noting is that both independent clause have subjects, the verbs and objects with their independent meanings. Example (86) on the other hand has an addition of a question particle *hena* ‘is’ which has been placed in sentence initial position before the

two independent clauses from which the addressee should choose. The subject in the second clause has been represented by a pronoun which acts as a subject concord of the noun John. The addressee in this example is required to state whether John is learning (in school) or he is in fact working. Example (87) equally has a question particle in the form of *hena* ‘are’ before the two independent clauses in which the speaker is inquiring whether the addressee is going to weed or is going to put medicine. The presupposition is that there are some weeds that needs to be cleared. Finally, example (88) has a question particle which may serve the purpose of focus as the speaker needs certainty on what option is being sought, whether to pay money or to offer an apology.

### 5.3.3.1.2 Two independent clauses with a negation

The second strategy used in the formation of alternative interrogatives involves the disjunction of two independent clauses in which the second clause is a negation of the first clause. In the formation of this type, the *na pe* ‘or not’ or *na* ‘or’ form of the disjunctive marker can be used. This type of alternative interrogative usually has the same subject in both clauses. Consider the examples below.

89. U            la        yanda            kulya   na   pe            to                            yandi?  
 2SG- You    do        want                to eat   or   not-NEG   you don't-NEG   want

Literally: You do want to eat or not you don't want.

‘Do you want to eat or you do not want?’

90. q    az++/

91. Hena        ba            ci    yandana            na   pe   ta    ba    ciyandani?  
 QP-Do   3PL-they   still   love each other   or   not        they   love each other

‘Do they still love each other or they don't still love each other?’

The examples above show a subtype of alternative interrogatives formed by using the disjunctive markers *na pe* ‘or not’ and *na* ‘or’ to join a clause with a positive proposition and

its negated form in the second clause. In (89), the two clauses are both independent but with different meanings. In this example, the different forms of the verb are being questioned, that is whether the respondent wants to eat or does not want to eat and he is directed to make a choice from these options. The second clause in this example has a double negation represented by the particle *pe* ‘not’ and the prefix *to-* ‘don’t’ in the phrase *toyandi* ‘you don’t want’. A double negation is a grammatical construction occurring when two forms of negation are used in the same sentence (Amel, 2011). In some languages, double negatives in a clause cancel one another and produce an affirmative. However, in the case of Tonga, the double negation as exhibited in example (89), intensifies the negation. It can be observed from the example that the verb *kulya* ‘to eat’ has been omitted in the second clause, this is mainly because it can be understood from context. Example (90) also has two clauses, with the second in the negative form. The disjunctive marker *na* ‘or’ without the particle *pe* ‘no’ has been used to join the two independent clauses. In contrast to example (89) the verb in (90) has been repeated in the second clause so as to avoid any possibility of ambiguity that may be created by deleting it in the second clause. Example (91) is also an example of an alternative question with the second clause being a negation of the first. The addressee is expected to choose from the two options as a response to this type of question. However, there are instances in Tonga where the addressee may not find any of the options as appropriate and therefore provides an answer outside the alternatives given by the speaker.

### 5.3.3.1.3 Independent clause and a word

The third strategy used in forming alternative questions in Tonga is by conjoining an independent clause and a phrase or a word with different grammatical status. The first structure is an independent clause and the second one is a single word. In this type of alternative question, the subject and the verb of the second alternative are the same as those of the first clause and are thus omitted in the second clause to avoid repetition. The question particles used in the formation of this type is *naanka* or *na* ‘or’ which is placed between the first alternative clause and the word acting as the second alternative of the question.

92. Hena        ba                ci        yandana                na        pe?  
 QP-Do        3PL-they        still    love each other        or        not?  
 ‘Do they still love each other or not?’

93. Hena mwana wa Chimuka musankwa na musimbi?

QP- Is child for Chimuka a Boy or a girl

‘Is Chimuka’s child a boy or a girl?’

94. Hena wa ba bona bataata naanka bamaama?

QP-Have 2SG-you HON-him/her seen father or mother

‘Have you seen father or mother?’

Examples (92-94), show the alternative interrogative type with an independent clause and a phrase. The difference between the two alternatives is that the first alternative has a subject, verb and an object and the second clause has only an object. This indicates that the phrase had a similar subject and verb like that of the clause which has been deleted through ellipsis. The ellipsis occurred because the phrase shares the subject and verb with the first alternative clause, thus the meaning can still be understood in context. The ellipsis results in focussing the object in the alternative question. Simons submits that there is a requirement which a disjunction must satisfy in order to constitute a felicitous contribution to an ordinary conversation: its disjuncts must be interpretable as relevant alternatives. When such an interpretation is not available, the disjunction is highly anomalous (Simons 2001: 597). Simons further argues that there is thus a requirement that the disjuncts of a clausal disjunction uttered in a conversation must constitute relevant and distinct alternatives. In the case of examples presented above, despite their syntactic distribution, they satisfy the relatedness condition as prescribed by Simons. The example in (92) is an instance of a verb less structure in the second alternative, where the copula is omitted and represented with a single word *pe* ‘not’ whose meaning in this case can only be understood in context during a conversation. Therefore, the omitted verb and subject of the second alternative is understood with reference to the subject and verb of the first clause because they refer to the same subject and object. The addressee is expected to choose from the first clause or from the verb less clause where the object is being questioned. In example (93), the objects of the clauses are being questioned and are given as options for the addressee to choose from. The subject and the verb of the second clause are the same as those of the first and therefore are not repeated. Therefore, the addressee is expected to choose *musankwa* ‘a boy’ or *musimbi* ‘a girl’ as answers to the question.

## 5.4 The Semantics of Interrogatives in Tonga

### 5.4.1. Answering Tonga Polar Questions

In addressing the objective that sought to understand the semantics of interrogatives in Tonga, the data is presented here below. However, before data is presented, Grimes' (1975) contribution on the semantics of polar questions is instructive: the answer "yes" asserts a positive answer and the answer "no" asserts a negative answer, irrespective of the form of the question. In Tonga, positive polar interrogatives are answered with a positive answer *inzya/ ii* which is an equivalent of the English yes, or with a negative answer *peepe* which is an equivalent of the English no. Further, the positive polar interrogative can be answered with the culturally appropriate non vocal gestures of nodding the head up and down to mean yes and sideways to mean no. In instances where the addressee is not sure, the answer is *ndiza* 'maybe' and when they are certain that they do not know, the answer is *tandizyi* 'I do not know'. The example in (95), demonstrates how polar interrogatives are answered in Tonga, (i) to confirm whether a proposition is true, (ii) deny a proposition, (iii) express uncertainty with the truth value of a proposition and (iv) to show the lack of knowledge of the truth value of a proposition.

95. Hena      Joni              wa      unka      ku      cikombelo      sunu?

QP-Did    SUBJ-John    SC    VB-go    OC    OBJ-church    ADV-today

'Did John go to church today?'

Possible answers

(i). *inzya*      'Yes'

(ii). *Peepe*      'No'

(iii). *Tandizyi* 'I do not know'

(iv). *Ndiza*      'Maybe'

Negative polar interrogatives in Tonga do not conform to the assertion by Grimes that, the answer "yes" asserts a positive answer and the answer "no" asserts a negative answer, irrespective of the form of the question. Instead, to answer negative polar interrogative in Tonga, the addressee responds with *inzya* 'yes' to confirm what the speaker's proposition and *peepe* 'no' to refute the speaker's negative proposition. Therefore, the addressee basically answers the negative interrogative in accordance with the given proposition, either agreeing

with it or refute its proposed truth value. Example (96), demonstrates this phenomenon in which the speaker was probably expecting the addressee to be eating but was not, hence the need for confirmation. The addressee in this case can either respond by saying *inzya/ii* to confirm that they do not want to eat or ‘*peepe*’ to refute the proposition that they do not want to eat, thereby suggesting to the contrary that they do want to eat. To avoid ambiguity in responding to negative polar interrogatives, an addressee can add an elliptical sentence to *inzya/ii* or *peepe*; an omission from the clause, of one or more words that are nevertheless understood in the context of the remaining elements as shown in (96).

96. To	yandi	kulya?
NEG-Do SIG-you/He/She	PRES-want	PRES-to eat
‘Don’t you want to eat?’		

Possible response.

- (i). Inzya/ii (Tandi yandi)      ‘yes’ (I don’t want) for affirmative
- (ii). Peepe (Ndila yanda)      ‘No’ (I want) for negation

Such questions as in (96) are answered using the main verb in the question attached with a prefix that marks for grammatical number and affirmative or negative sense as shown in the two possible responses above in *ndila yanda* ‘I want’ or *tandi yandi* ‘I don’t want’ This phenomenon of answer ellipsis is common in Chinese which does not have words that are compared to *yes* and *no*. Therefore, in providing a response to a polar question in Chinese, one has to literally answer using the main verb in the question demanding a response. For example, when asked, “*Do you like tea?*” one has to answer literally *like*, for affirmative or literally *not like* for negative. But when asked “*Do you play basketball?*” one needs to answer literally *I play* for affirmative and literally *I don’t play* for negative (Dryer, M 2005).

#### 5.4.2. Answering Tonga Constituent Interrogatives

When responding to Tonga Constituent interrogatives, a single answer is plausible without repeating some category of the question. Examples are shown below.

97. a. Question

Wa	ka	fwa	buti?
He/she	PST	died	INTW-how

‘How did he die?’

b. Answer

Wa            ka            lijaya  
He/she      PST          killed self  
‘He/she killed him/herself.’

98. a. Question

Wa            zwa            kuli?  
2SG-you     come from    where  
‘Where have you come from?’

b. Answer

(i). Kucikolo ‘School’  
(ii). Ndazwa kucikolo ‘Am coming from school’

99. a. Question

U            yanda          cuuno          cili?  
2SG-you     want            chair            which-INTW  
‘Which chair do you want?’

b. Answer

(i). Cisubila ‘The red one’  
(ii). Ndiyanda cisubila ‘I want the red one’  
(iii). Ndiyanda cuuno cisubila ‘I want the red chair’

100. a. Question

Ba            ka            sika            lili?  
3PL-they    did          arrive          when-INTW  
‘When did they arrive?’

b. Answer

(i). Jilo ‘Yesterday’

(ii). Bakasika jilo ‘They arrived yesterday’

101. a. Question

Nkaambo nzi nco wamukila?

INTP-for what reason that you are late-PST

‘Why are you late?’

b. Answer

(i). Ndamuka kubuka ‘I woke up late’

(ii). Nkaambo kakuti, ndamuka kubuka ‘Because I woke up late’

102. a. Question

Nguni wa ku musya?

INTP-it is who that you-1SG delay-PST

‘Who delayed you?’

b. Answer

(i). Bataata ‘Father’

(ii). Bandimusya mbataata ‘The one who delayed me is father’

103. a. Question

U yanda kulya nzi?

1SG-you want to eat what-INTW

‘What do you want to eat?’

b. Answer

(i). Musozya ‘Samp’

(ii). Ndiyanda kulya musozya ‘I want to eat samp.’

Examples (97-103) above shows constituent interrogatives with two sets of possible answers except for examples 97 and 99 which has a single and three possible responses respectively. The responses marked (i) are not elaborate but they are adequate to fill the information gap while those marked (ii) are elaborate in that they are a complete sentences containing the subject, verb and object of the sentence. The questions sampled above are questioning the subject, the verb or the object of the sentences. In (97a) the interrogative word *buti* ‘how’ questions the intransitive verb die by seeking the manner in which someone died. The presupposition by the speaker is that someone died, and they now seek to know the missing information on how this particular person died. In answering this question the addressee provides a full clause as in (97b). The interrogative phrase *nguni* ‘it is who’ in (102a) questions the subject of the sentence. The presupposition of the speaker is that the addressee was late and that they were delayed by someone whose identity is the information gap that needs to be discovered. Two possible responses are generated for this question. 102.b.i) shows the possible answer as simply naming a noun *bataata* ‘father’ while the answer in (102.b.ii) is a full clause with a noun *bataata* ‘father’ because it is the main argument substituted by the interrogative word *nguni* ‘who’. The question in example (103a) seeks to gather the missing information about the direct object of the sentence. The questioner has a presupposition that the respondent wants to eat something but is uncertain on what it is they wish to eat, hence the question. The respondent has two possible answers; the answer in (103.b.i) provides for only a proper noun *musozya* ‘samp’ while the answer in (103.b.ii) provides for a full clause and the proper noun.

### 5.4.3. Answering Tonga Alternative Interrogatives

Biezma and Rawlin (2012) support Hamblin’s proposal (Hamblin 1958) that with regards to the alternatives corresponding to disjuncts, the alternatives introduced by alternative questions must exhaust the space of possibilities, and must be mutually exclusive (2012:10). Alternative interrogatives in Tonga are answered by selecting a response from the provided options. Consider example (104) below.

104. a. Hena      ula      kkala      na      ula      unka?  
 QW-Are    you      staying      or      you      leaving  
 ‘Are you staying or leaving?’

b. Possible Answers

i. Ndila kkala ‘I will stay’

ii. Ndilaunka ‘I will leave’

Typically, an alternative interrogative’s main function is to offer an unbiased choice between the alternatives offered by the disjunction Biezma and Rawlin (2012). Therefore, when responding to an alternative question, the most natural thing that an addressee will do is to choose one of the offered alternatives as shown in example (104), wherein, one might simply respond, *ndilakkala* ‘I will stay’ or *ndilaunka* ‘I will leave’. When a speaker chooses to use an alternative interrogative to elicit information, they are directly or indirectly giving the addressee a hint that they do not consider one of the two possible answers to be more or less likely. Such a question as in (104) signals that the only possibilities for the addressee are either staying or leaving. By uttering this question, the speaker limits the possible answers to those alternatives specifically expressed in the question. If the addressee is satisfied that the given options from which to choose are relevant and adequate, they can choose from the given options. However, if the options given are not salient, the addressee may invoke a different alternative appropriate to satisfy the question. Consider example (105) below.

105. U           yanda   kulya   nsima   naanka   ntyola?

2SG-You   want   to eat   nshima   or   rice

‘You want to eat nshima or rice?’

#### Possible Answers

- i.       Ndiyanda nsima   ‘I want nshima’
- ii.     Ndiyanda ntyola   ‘I want rice’
- iii.    Nseyandi kulya pe   ‘I don’t want to eat no’

Example (105) has three possible answers to the question. In (i & ii), the addressee chooses from the two alternatives given either, *ndiyanda nsima* ‘I want nshima’ or *ndiyanda ntyola* ‘I want rice’ as shown above. The third alternative has not been provided in the options and can be termed “not compliant” but this does not limit the addressee to the two alternatives because they are responding to the implied meaning of the question in which the questioner assumes that the addressee wants to eat something. A common challenge about alternative questions is the possible answers from the alternatives don’t usually exhaust all the possible responses to

this type of question. Logically speaking, the addressee may not want any of the options given as in example (106) above. In fact, someone may want both of the options given as in (102) below.

106. Insima    uyanda            kwiilisya    nyama    na    nswi?

Nshima    you want            to eat with    meat            or    fish

‘You want to eat the nshima with meat or fish?’

#### Possible Answers

- i.    Anyama                    ‘with meat’
- ii.    Answi                        ‘with fish’
- iii.    Azyoonse zyobilo        ‘with both’

The answers in (106. i and ii) are the most compliant responses in that they are drawn from the options provided by the questioner. The response in (106. iii) is regarded as less compliant with the questioner’s goals but it is a possible answer if the addressee fails to choose only one of the alternatives given. Except such a scenario may create a burden for the questioner to try to fulfil both possibilities. Such response that are less compliant depend heavily on the context, and how the questioner is willing to accept or reject possible answers not provided as options. It is worth noting that less compliant responses are not always appropriate or felicitous. Some alternative questions cover all possibilities and block the both response as in example (107) which has two opposite alternatives.

107. Hena    ulaunka            ku    cikombelo    na    pe?

QW-Are    you going            to    church            or    not

‘Are you going to church or not?’

The fact that the two alternatives provided are opposite in nature, leaves no room for any extra response. The addressee in this case is limited only to the two alternatives because it is not possible that someone can do both; going and not going to church.

## 5.5. Summary

This chapter discusses the inherent features of polar, constituent and alternative interrogative particles in Tonga in accordance with the objectives given in chapter one of this study. In the formation of polar interrogatives, the data reveals that there are two strategies used to in the formation of polar interrogatives in Tonga, and these include the use of interrogative particles and tone marking. The study has shown that what distinguishes a declarative sentence from an interrogative sentence, is the intonation marked on the interrogative. The high pitch is placed on all the constituent elements of the sentence to mark it as an interrogative. The study has also established that in the formation of polar interrogatives in Tonga, the interrogative particle *hena* is syntactically used to mark interrogatives. It is placed either in the initial or final position of the sentence with the initial position being dominant, coupled with a rising and falling pitch on the particle. Furthermore, the study has shown that three types of focus namely; subject, object and adjuncts, are used in Tonga to assign prominence on a constituent of a sentence. The focus particle *na* is used to mark focus and it is placed directly following the element which is being assigned prominence. Finally, in answering polar interrogatives in Tonga, an addressee will answer with *inzya/ii* to mean yes or *peepe* to mean no when responding to positive polar interrogatives accompanied with culturally appropriate gestures of head nodding. Negative polar interrogative are answered by affirming or refuting the proposition of an utterance with *inzya* or *peepe* respectively. The study has identified seven interrogative words and phrases used in the formation of constituent interrogatives in Tonga.

The study, as shown in the current chapter, has established that all the interrogative words and phrases can occur both in-situ and ex-situ except for *kuli* ‘where’, *kai* ‘why’ and *nkaambo nzi* ‘why’. The work has shown that constituent interrogatives in Tonga can be answered by either using a full clause that contains the constituent that fill the information gap the interrogative words seek to link or by use of a simple phrase or word made up of the constituent being questioned. Finally, to achieve focus of constituent interrogatives in Tonga, the interrogative word or phrases are fronted in the initial position of a sentence and are coupled with a high pitch intonation. The chapter discussed alternative interrogatives as a question type in Tonga where the speaker provides options for the addressee to choose from. It has been established from the data above that Tonga uses the particles *naanka*, *na* and *na pe* equivalent to the English disjunction ‘or’ in the formation of alternative interrogatives in Tonga. Three types of alternative interrogatives were identified; one with two independent clauses, two independent clauses where one is a negation and one with an independent clause and a word or phrase. *Na*

*pe* 'or not' may only be used in the formation of the subtype of independent clause and a negation. It can also be observed from the data that the interrogative particles for this type can only be placed between clauses as they cannot occur in the initial or final positions of sentences. The chapter further explored how alternative interrogatives are answered in Tonga and the data has shown that most compliant answers are those drawn from the alternatives given by the question. However, less compliant response such as choosing both the alternatives and not choosing any of the alternatives is possible but they are heavily depend on the context and available assumptions as well as the questioner's willingness to accept these possible answers as appropriate.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

#### 6.0 Introduction

The aim of the study was to provide a comprehensive description of interrogatives in Tonga, a language spoken in Zambia and the following were the objectives of the study:

- i. To provide a taxonomy of interrogative particles in Tonga.
- ii. To account for the morphology and phonology of interrogatives markers in Tonga.
- iii. To establish the syntactic distribution of the interrogative markers in Tonga.
- iv. To examine the manifestation of semantics in interrogative formation in Tonga.

The study was conducted under the auspices of the Basic Linguistic Theory which provided a better platform for a descriptive analysis of interrogatives in Tonga. Therefore, the study describes the interrogative clause in Tonga and the interrogative particles of the language in the area of phonology, morphology, Syntax and semantics. The current chapter gives a conclusion of the dissertation by relating the findings discussed in the chapter above to the objectives of the study, pointing out exactly what the study has achieved.

#### 6.1. Conclusion

The general overview of the dissertation is given. The Tonga language that was under consideration in this study is a language spoken by a Bantu group of people found mainly in the southern part of Zambia and some parts of Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The study has provided an overview of the situatedness of interrogatives in the broader scope of sentence types. Since the focus of the study was interrogative sentences, the interrogative types (Polar, Constituent and Alternative interrogatives) were discovered to be common in Tonga. The reviewed literature has shown that much research has been conducted in Tonga but there still lacks enough work that focuses primarily on interrogative constructions in Tonga or any Zambian language for that matter. Therefore, the current study has partially bridged that information gap. Lastly, the data as presented and analysed in this study speak directly to the linguistically unique nature of interrogatives in Tonga.

The subsections that follow, specify the findings and how they address the research questions.

### 6.1.1. A taxonomy of interrogative markers in Tonga.

As one of the objectives, the study sought to provide a taxonomy of interrogative particles in Tonga. As such, the data presented and discussed has shown that interrogative particles do occur in all the three interrogative types that arise in Tonga. Polar interrogatives employ four types of interrogative particles in their formation. These interrogative particles are *hena*, *tee*, *na* and *tonal particles*. Constituent interrogatives in Tonga use *Buti*, *(Ku)li*, *(Mu)li*, *(Aa)li*, *Cili*, *Lili*, *Nkaambo nzi/ kai/nzi*, *Ni*, *Nzi* while the alternative interrogatives in Tonga engage the following disjunctive particles in their formation: *Naanka*, *Na* and *Na pe*. While this is not a comparative study, it is impossible to overlook the difference in the number of interrogative particles that Tonga employs to the number of interrogative particles used in English. For example, Tonga is more productive in the formation of alternative interrogatives in that it provides three options of disjunctive particles which are equivalent to a single form in English. Furthermore, while English slightly distinguishes the variants of the interrogative particle ‘*where*’, Tonga goes further to provide distinctive forms of the particle *-li* which successfully manages to pin point the exact location of where something is. Observe example (108) below.

108. Musamu            uli    muli?

The medicine    is    INTW-where (in)

‘Where (in) is the medicine?’

### 6.1.2. Morphology and Phonology of Interrogative particles

In addressing the objective that relates to the morphology and phonology of interrogative particles in Tonga, the data presented reveals that there are two strategies used in the formation of polar interrogatives in Tonga, and these include the use of interrogative particles and tone marking. The data showed that what distinguishes a declarative sentence from an interrogative sentence, is the intonation marked on the interrogative. For example,

109. (a). Declarative: toyandi ‘You don’t want’

(b). Interrogative: toya’ndi ‘Don’t you want?’

The high pitch is placed on all the constituent elements of the sentence to mark it as an interrogative. As observed in the literature reviewed, Dorylo (2008) concluded that in Logba, a declarative sentence can be transformed into an interrogative by raising the pitch of the final syllable. However in Tonga, it can be observed that, when using tone to transform a declarative

into a question, the pitch raising is not only limited to one element but to all tone bearing units. Being mindful of the fact that this study is not comparative in nature, it suffices to note that this phenomenon of transforming declarative sentences into interrogative using tone, is not only common to Bantu languages as English can achieve the same in an informal set up using stress. The study has also established that in the formation of polar interrogatives in Tonga, the interrogative particle *hena*, a free morpheme made up of two syllables; the /he/ which carries a high tone and the /na/ which carries a low tone is uttered with a rising and low pitch to mark interrogatives. In the formation of constituent interrogatives in Tonga, the interrogative particles have several manifestations. In particular, the interrogative word *ni* ‘who’ can take the form of singularity or plurality depending on the nature of the subject and object of the clause. When used in the singular sense, *ni* ‘who’ is realised as *nguni* ‘it is who’ by adding the prefix *ngu-* to the root word *-ni* and when used in the plural sense, it is realised as *mbaani* ‘they are who’ by adding a prefix *mba-* to the root *-ni*. It is worth noting that the metamorphosis of the interrogative particle *ni* ‘who’, is purely dependent on the context as each speech act will determine which form the speakers will use. The interrogative particle *li* ‘where’ manifests itself as a morpheme which can be attached with prefix particles, for example: *ku-* to form *kuli* ‘where (at, to)’, *mu-* to form *muli* ‘where (in)’, *aa-* to form *aali* ‘where (on, at)’ and phrasal prefix *nkuku-* to form the phrase *nkukuli* ‘it is where’. Again, with this type of interrogative particle, the transformation is contextual. For example, the form *muli* ‘where in’ is used under the assumption that both the speaker and the addressee have a common knowledge that whatever is being looked for is inside something. Otherwise, the speaker would basically just use *kuli* ‘where at’ if this information or knowledge is not mutual.

Further, in the formation of constituent interrogatives, the interrogative particle *nzi* ‘why’ is used and is sometimes attached to the verb reason to form *nkaambo nzi* ‘for what reason’. The data has also shown that *lili* ‘when’ and *-li* ‘which’ are used in the formation of this interrogative type. The interrogative particle *cili* whose stem is *-li* is attached with the prefix *ci-* when seeking information about inanimate nouns and prefix *il-* is attached when addressing animate nouns while the prefix *zyi-* is attached to the stem when specifying more than one thing. Lastly, the particle *nzi* ‘what’ is used in a general sort of way with the prefix particles *nci-* when asking questions about things or with the prefix particle *zyi-* to show plurality as in *zyinzi*. Based on the observed behaviour of constituent interrogatives in Tonga, it can be concluded that the prefixes that form the different realisations of the interrogative particles *-li* ‘which’ and *-nzi* ‘what’ are selected based on a semantic criterion which is consistent with the

prescribed noun class system for Bantu languages. What this means is that, the particles are marked by a set of singular and plural prefixes that indicate also the category to which the noun used as the subject of the sentence belongs, and, if there is an object, the words in that noun phrase and the verb are also marked by a prefix determined by the noun class of the object. For example,

110. U            yanda            **cinyama**            **cili**  
 2SG-You    want            CL7-animal    INTW-which

‘Which animal do you want?’

The prefix *ci-* used on the interrogative particle is determined by the noun class of the subject used in the sentence.

### 6.1.3. Syntactic distribution of interrogative particles

In addressing the syntax of interrogatives in Tonga, which sought in particular, to locate the positions that interrogative particle occupy in the formation of interrogatives in Tonga. The study established as evidenced by the data presented, that, in the formation of constituent interrogatives, the particles ‘*hena*’, ‘*na*’ and ‘*tee*’ are placed either in the initial or final position of the sentence with the initial position being dominant, coupled with a rising and low pitch on the particle, for example,

111. heña                            walya  
 INTW- have    2SG-you eaten

‘Have you eaten?’

Furthermore, the data showed that three types of focus namely; subject, object and adjuncts, are used in Tonga to assign prominence on a constituent of a sentence. The focus particle *na* is used to mark focus and it is placed directly following the element which is being assigned prominence. In summary, it can be said that, all the interrogative words in Tonga occur in-situ and ex-situ except for *kuli* ‘where’, *kai* ‘why’ and *nkaambo nzi* ‘why’ that occupy the initial position only. Cable (2010) has clustered languages into two groups based on the wh-movement: those that have interrogative particles in ex-situ and those that permit in-situ positions only. However, this study has revealed that Tonga does not subscribe to this assertion because of the versatile nature of the Interrogative particles in that they are not limited to a

single position. Suffice to mention that, in Tonga, the placement of interrogative particle in the initial or final positions of a sentence is both stylistic and for emphasis purposes.

Concerning alternative interrogatives particles in Tonga, it was established from the data that Tonga uses the particles *naanka*, *na* and *na pe* which is equivalent to the English disjunction ‘or’ in the formation of this interrogative type. Three types of alternative interrogatives were identified; one with two independent clauses, two independent clauses where one is a negation and one with an independent clause and a word. *Na pe* may only be used in the formation of the subtype of independent clause and a negation. The conclusion is that, Tonga allows for elliptical clauses in interrogatives, and that such truncated structures are born from the full independent alternative clause because what is not said is understood. For example,

112. Hena            uya                            ku    Monze    na    ku    Mazabuka?  
INTW-are    2SG-you going    to    Monze    or    to    Mazabuka  
‘Are you going to Monze or Mazabuka?’

The second structure is truncated but understood from the context of first alternative. It is worth noting that in the formation of alternative interrogatives, Tonga uses an obligatory syntactic structure in that the alternative structures have to be related in nature. Thus, Tonga does not permit to choose alternatives that are unrelated such as chocolate and wood.

#### **6.1.4. Manifestation of semantics in the formation of interrogatives.**

Finally, as one of the major objectives of the study, manifestation of semantics was examined in the formation of interrogatives in Tonga. In particular, the study sought to establish how interrogatives are answered within the broader context of meaning making. In answering polar interrogatives in Tonga, the data revealed that, an addressee will answer with *inzya* to mean yes or *peepe* to mean no when responding to positive polar interrogatives accompanied with culturally appropriate gestures of head nodding for example,

113. Hena    ulayanda    cibwantu?  
INTW-do    2SG-you want    cibwantu  
‘Do you want cibwantu?’

Answer: *inzya* ‘yes’ or *Peepe* ‘No’

Negative polar interrogative are answered by affirming or refuting the proposition of an utterance with *inzya* or *peepe* respectively. Constituent interrogatives have been identified as interrogatives which use interrogative words or phrases to enquire information and they require more than a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ as an answer. The work has shown that constituent interrogatives in Tonga can be answered by either using a full clause that contains the constituent that fill the information gap the interrogative words seek to link or by use of a simple phrase or word made up of the constituent being questioned. It can be observed that in answering both polar and constituent interrogatives, Tonga applies some linguistic economy as it is unlikely that the addressee will repeat the entire interrogative structure in their response. The data has further shown that most compliant answers are those drawn from the alternatives given by the question. However, less compliant response such as choosing both the alternatives and not choosing any of the alternatives is possible but they are heavily dependent on the context and available assumptions as well as the questioner’s willingness to accept these possible answers as appropriate.

## **6.2. Contributions and Recommendations**

According to my knowledge, this is the first study that has thoroughly explored interrogative constructions in Tonga, providing a model for future work. Therefore, this work shall serve as a stepping stone for other studies on interrogative constructions in other Zambian languages where such a feature of the human language has not been explored. The study has revealed that Tonga is more productive with regards to interrogative particles as it has more compared to the other languages reviewed in the literature. Further, the study has shown that concerning the mobility of interrogative particles, Tonga is flexible as particles can occupy either the initial or final position of a sentence. Morphologically, the interrogative particles in Tonga have different formations depending on the context of use, and thus provides a more accurate use of interrogatives. The current study has also created opportunities for further in depth linguistic analysis of the interrogative types discussed in this paper as it may not have been completely exhaustive. The current study was descriptive in nature, as a result, it may not have adequately explored the syntax of interrogatives particularly the constituent interrogative type. As such, I recommend further studies on this type using other theories such as The Minimalist Program to account for the movement of interrogative words. Being a tonal language that Tonga is, I feel not much justice has been done in exploring the phonology of interrogatives in Tonga. Therefore, there is need to conduct an exhaustive study on the phonology of these interrogative types in Tonga. Under the auspices of Morphosyntax, the aspect of agreement markers or

subject marking on verbs in the formation of interrogatives in Tonga is another feature that can be given further attention. The current study briefly showed this phenomena but was not in detail due to limitations on space. Finally, this work has added to the available literature on the Tonga grammar.

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## APPENDICES

**TABLE 1: Declarative Sentences**

1. I want to eat.
2. He came yesterday.
3. We should leave early.
4. My new car is black.
5. I hope you can come tomorrow.
6. These are my shoes.
7. She asked whether I liked her dress.
8. Joseph is Tonga.
9. Fetch my pair of trousers.
10. These are my cows.
11. John was working all night.
12. They have been married for ten years.
13. Mweetwa likes tea.
14. My father is coming back next year.
15. He died last year.
16. She ate the meat.
17. Miyoni is representing the children.
18. I have sent him to town.
19. His father has borrowed the axe.
20. I want nshima.

**TABLE 2: Interrogative Words in Tonga**

<b>Interrogative words</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Referent</b>
Buti	How	Manner
(Ku)li (Mu)li (Aa)li	Where (at, to) Where (in) Where (on, at)	Location
Cili	which	Object (Generic)
Lili	When	Time
Nkaambo nzi/ kai/ nzi	why	Reason
Ni	Who	Person
Nzi	What	Object