

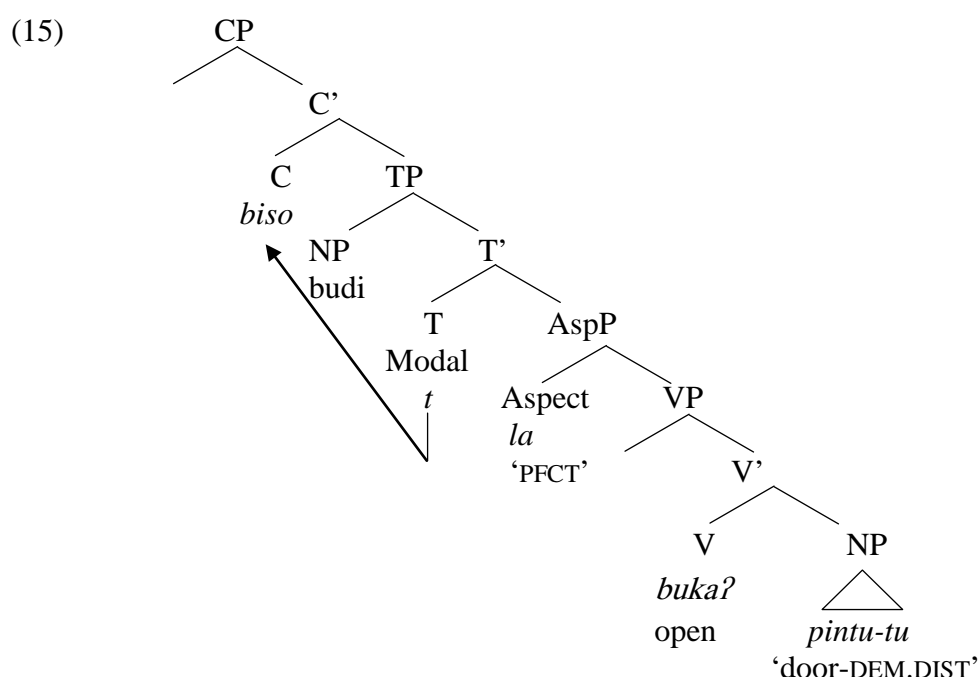
biso. However, the data in this section have shown that different word orders trigger different interpretations of *biso*.

4. Evidence from Fronting

Further evidence comes from fronting. In Jambi Malay, it is possible to front *biso* past the subject of the clause, as shown in (14) below. However, when *biso* is fronted, it loses its ambiguity. The fronted *biso* can only be interpreted epistemically.

- (14) a. *biso ida la ambe? panci-tu*
 can Ida PFCT take pot-DEM.DIST
 ‘It is possible that Ida has taken the pot.’
 *‘It is the case that Ida has been able to take the pot.’
- b. *biso budi la buka? pintu-tu*
 can Budi PFCT open door-DEM.DIST
 ‘It is possible that Budi has opened that door.’
 *‘It is the case that Budi has been able to open that door.’

Let us now examine how the interpretation of (14) can be explained based on the proposed syntactic structure. If the fronted *biso* is base-generated in the epistemic modal, i.e. in T, as shown by the structure in (9)/(13), then *biso* undergoes head-movement to C in order to get the word order in (14). This is illustrated below (I only show the structure for (14)b).



As (15) illustrates, the epistemic *biso* has moved from T to C.⁴ This movement is possible and thus the fronted *biso* in (14) is interpreted epistemically.

⁴ Timothy McKinnon (p.c.) points out that an alternative hypothesis is that epistemics are always generated above TP, and stay in situ, while the subject optionally moves to the topic position. Whether this analysis is preferred to the proposed structure in this paper is left to future research.

