

Questions I

YES-NO Questions

This type of question in Tagalog is easily identifiable because it is marked by the particle BA, referred to by many grammar books as the yes-no question marker. It also has a rising intonation just like question patterns in English.

The Particle BA

The particle BA usually comes after the first element of a sentence. BA works about the same as a question mark. It lets the speaker know that you are asking a question. Please note that BA is only used for questions that must have a yes or no answer.

1) In a simple predicative sentence, it comes after the predicate.

Here are some examples:

Doktor si Pedro sa PGH. Pedro is a doctor at PGH.

Doktor ba si Pedro sa PGH? Is Pedro a doctor at PGH?

Mabait si Maria. Maria is kind.

Mabait ba si Maria? Is Maria kind?

Pupunta si Tess sa Cebu bukas. Tess is going to Cebu tomorrow.

Pupunta ba si Tess sa Cebu bukas? Is Tess going to Cebu tomorrow?

2) In an AY-sentence, it comes after the focus.

Here are some examples:

Si Pedro ay doktor sa PGH. Pedro is a doctor at PGH.

Si Pedro ba ay doktor sa PGH? Is Pedro a doctor at PGH?

Si Maria ay mabait. Maria is kind.

Si Maria ba ay mabait? Is Maria kind?

Si Tess ay pupunta sa Cebu bukas. Tess is going to Cebu tomorrow.

Si Tess ba ay pupunta sa Cebu bukas? Is Tess going to Cebu tomorrow?

3) In an emphatic sentence, BA comes after an emphasized element (such as location, time indicator, or direction).

Here are some examples:

Bukas, pupunta si Tess sa Cebu. Tomorrow, Tess is going to Cebu.

Bukas ba pupunta si Tess sa Cebu? Is it tomorrow that Tess goes to Cebu?

Sa Linggo, si Mila ay darating. On Sunday, Mila arrives.

Sa Linggo ba darating si Mila? Is it on Sunday that Mila arrives?

The exceptions to this rule include sentences that contain the pronoun KA and enclitics such as NA, PA, NAMAN, etc.

Tag questions

Tag questions in Tagalog are expressed by the phrase "hindi ba?" (or its shortened form "'di ba?"). Its closest equivalent in English is "Is it not?"

Here are some examples:

Estudyante ka sa NIU, 'di ba? You are a student at NIU, aren't you?

Maganda ang pelikula, hindi ba? The movie was good, wasn't it?

Tumira ka sa Banaue, hindi ba? You lived in Banaue, didn't you?

Nasa Hawaii si Ruth, hindi ba? Ruth is in Hawaii, isn't she?

May tanong ka, 'di ba? You have a question, don't you?

Sino

This is the Tagalog equivalent of the English word who. It is always followed by an ANG-clause (a focused clause). The expected response to this question is a sentence that has ANG-phrases in both predicate and subject positions (referred to as an identificational sentence). Or, phrased differently, the answer to a SINO question will have both the subject and the predicate in focus. Let's look at the first example:

Sino ang bagong titser?

Si Ginang Santos (ang bagong titser).

Notice that both Ginang Santos and bagong titser are in focus. The direct answer to the question is Si Ginang Santos. The second part is optional, it merely makes the answer more complete. When translating this sentence into English, we see that there is some sort of implied is between Si Ginang Santos and ang bagong titser. The word is functions like an equal sign. So, if the two parts of the sentence are equal and if the first part of the sentence is in focus, it seems reasonable that the second part of the sentence would be in focus as well.

When the anticipated response is a plural noun, the question word used by many speakers is sinu-sino. Or in other words, if only one person is being asked about, the word sino is used. If more than one person is being asked about then sinu-sino is used. Here are some examples:

Sino ang bagong titser? Who is the new teacher?

Si Ginang Santos (ang bagong titser). Mrs. Santos (is the new teacher).

Sino ang kasama mo sa Bacolod? Who went with you to Bacolod?

Si Robert (ang kasama ko sa Bacolod). Robert (went to Bacolod with me).

Sino ang nagluto ng pansit? Who cooked the pansit?

Ang nanay ni Fe (ang nagluto ng pansit). Fe's mom (cooked the pansit).

Sino ang magdadala ng radyo? Who is going to bring a radio?
Si Noel (ang magdadala ng radyo). Noel (is going to bring a radio).

Sinu-sino ang sasama sa Sagada? Who are going (with me) to Sagada?
Kaming lahat (ang sasama sa Sagada). All of us (are going to Sagada).

Sinu-sino ang taga-Maynila rito? Who are from Manila here?
Si Lita, si Fe at ako (ang taga-Maynila). Lita, Fe, and I (are from Manila).

Ano

This is the equivalent of the English word what. It is followed by an ANG-phrase (phrase that is in focus) and may be answered by a simple nominal, adjectival, or verbal sentence. When the anticipated response is a plural noun-phrase, some speakers use the question word anu-ano. In other words, if only one thing is asked about, then the word ano is used. If more than one thing is asked about, then anu-ano is used. Here are some examples:

Ano ang pangalan mo? What is your name?
Maria (ang pangalan ko). (My name is) Maria.
Ano ang "major" mo? What is your major?
Kasaysayan (ang "major" ko). (My major is) history.

Ano ang ginawa mo noong Sabado? What did you do last Saturday?
Pumunta ako sa Laguna noong Sabado. I went to Laguna last Saturday.

Ano ang pinanood ninyo kahapon? What did you watch yesterday?
Pinanood namin ang "Ifugaw" kahapon. We watched "Ifugaw" yesterday.

Anu-ano ang dala mo? What do you have there?
Mga prutas at gulay (ang dala ko). (I have) fruits and vegetables (here).

Anu-ano ang sinabi ng tatay? What did Dad say?
Sinabi niya na huwag kang iinom ng alak at umuwi ka ng maaga.
He said that you should not have liquor and you have to go home early.

Saan

This is the equivalent of the English word where. The question is usually answered with the word SA. If only one place is asked about, then word saan is used. If more than one place is asked about, then saan-saan is used. Here are some examples:

Saan ka nakatira? Where do you live?
Sa Malate (ako nakatira). (I live) in Malate.
Saan ang bayan ng nanay mo? Where is your mother's town?

Sa Ilokos (ang bayan ng nanay ko). (My mother's town is) in Ilokos.

Saan ka magbabakasyon? Where are you going for a vacation?

Sa Bikol (ako magbabakasyon). (I am going) to Bikol (for a vacation).

Saan-saan kayo pumunta noong "summer"? Where did you go last summer?

(Pumunta kami) sa Iloilo, sa Bacolod at sa Davao (noong "summer").

(We went) to Iloilo, Bacolod, and Davao (last summer).

Saan-saan kayo lumibot sa Amerika? Where did you go in in the US?

(Namasyal kami) sa San Francisco, sa Chicago at sa New York.

(We visited) San Francisco, Chicago and New York.

Ilan

This is the Tagalog equivalent of the English interrogative pronoun how many. The answers to ILAN questions always include numbers or other words that express quantity (how much of something). Here are some examples:

Ilan ang kapatid mo? How many siblings do you have?

Pito (ang kapatid ko). (I have) seven (siblings).

Ilan ang estudyante ng Tagalog? How many Tagalog students are there?

Labinlima (ang estudyante ng Tagalog). (There are) fifteen (Tagalog students).

Ilan ang klase mo tuwing Lunes? How many classes do you have on Mondays?

Tatlo (ang klase ko tuwing Lunes). (I have) three (classes on Mondays).

Ilan ang dumating na bisita kagabi? How many guests came last night?

Marami (ang dumating na bisita kagabi). Many (guests came last night).

Ilan ang batang naglalaro sa labas? How many kids are playing outside?

Iilan lang (ang batang naglalaro sa labas).

(There are) only a number (of kids playing outside).

Verbal Focus

Actor-Focus (AF) Verbs

There are three affixes that are used to indicate that the focus of the sentence is doing the action (actor) of the verb. The three affixes are -UM-, MAG-, and MA-. These affixes all have the same function. You can think of them as different ways of saying the same thing. Adding either -UM-, MAG-, or MA- onto a verb will indicate that the focus of the sentence is doing the action.

The -UM- Verb

This verb is formed by attaching the infix -UM- to the verb root. The -UM- affix

always comes right before the first vowel of the root word. Here are some commonly used -UM- verbs, followed by sample sentences, all of which are in the perfective aspect ("past") form.

Root Word, Actor Focus, Verb Sentence

takbo, tumakbo to run, Tumakbo ang bata. The child ran.

bili, bumili to buy, Bumili ng mangga ang babae.

The woman bought (some) mangoes.

tawag, tumawag to call, Tumawag si Ana kahapon. Ana called yesterday.

punta, pumunta to go, Pumunta si Pedro sa Maynila. Pedro went to Manila.

alis, umalis to leave, Umalis ako nang maaga. I left early.

Let's look at the second sentence:

Bumili ng mangga ang babae.

bought mango woman

The -UM- affix tells you that the focus of the sentence did the buying. The focus of the sentence is babae (woman). You can tell this because babae has ang in front. This is how you know that it was the woman who bought the mangoes (and not the mangoes that bought the woman!).

The MAG- Verb

This verb is formed by attaching the prefix MAG- to the verb root. Because MAG- is a prefix, it is always attached to the front of the word. When MAG- is attached to a root/stem that starts with a vowel, a hyphen (-) is used. Here are some commonly used MAG- verbs, followed by sample sentences, all of which are in the perfect aspect ("past") form.

Root Word, Actor Focus, Verb Sentence

luto, magluto to cook,

Nagluto ng pansit ang nanay niya. Her mom cooked noodles.

kuwento, magkuwento to tell a story,

Nagkuwento ang lolo tungkol sa multo. Grandpa told a story about ghosts.

linis, maglinis to clean something,

Naglinis ng bahay si Rene. Rene cleaned the house.

laro, maglaro to play,

Naglaro sina Paul ng basketball. Paul (and friends) played basketball.

aral, mag-aral to study,

Nag-aral kami sa laybrari kagabi. We studied in the library last night.

The MA- Verb

MA- verbs do not occur as frequently as the other two actor affixes. There are very

few verb roots/stems that take the MA- prefix to mark actor focus. Here are some of the more common MA-verbs followed by sample sentences, all of which are in the perfect aspect ("past") form.

Root Word, Actor Focus, Verb Sentence

tulog, matulog to sleep, Natulog ang lalaki. The man slept.

ligo, maligo to take a shower/bath,

Naligo ang mga bata sa ilog. The children bathed in the river.

nood,* manood to watch something,

Nanood ng sine si Mila. Mila watched a movie.

kinig,* makinig to listen,

Nakinig siya sa guro. He listened to the teacher.

*These are not simple roots.

Object-Focus (OF) Verbs

There are several affixes that indicate that the focus of the sentence is the object (receiver of the action). The most common ones are discussed in this section, -IN, I-, -AN, and MA-. Attaching any of these affixes on to a verb indicates that the focus of the sentence is the receiver of the action (object). Be aware however that -IN is the only affix that is used solely to mark the focus as the object. In a sense, it is the prototypical object focus affix. The other affixes can indicate object focus, but they can also be used for different purposes. I- may also mark beneficiary- or instrumental-focus, -AN locative- or beneficiary-focus, and MA- actor-focus. A learner would be advised to memorize the functions of the different affixes. The table of verbs provided in this site should be a helpful introduction.

The -IN Verb

The affix -IN is the only "real" object-focus affix. That is, an -IN verb is always object-focus. When -IN is attached to a verb that ends in a vowel, an H is needed between it and the affix. Here are some examples, all of which are in the imperative or command form:

Root Word, Object Focus, Verb Sentence

bili, bilhin to buy, Bilhin mo ang sapatos. (You) Buy the (pair of) shoes.

kain, kainin to eat, Kainin mo ang lumpiya. (You) Eat the egg roll.

basa, basahin to read,

Basahin mo ang diyaryo mamaya. (You) Read the newspaper later.

luto, lutuin to cook,

Lutuin mo ang isda sa kusina. (You) Cook the fish in the kitchen.

Let's take a look at the last example:

Lutuin mo ang isda sa kusina.
cook you fish kitchen

The -IN affix tells you that the focus is to receive the action of the verb. The focus is isda (fish), so you know that it is the fish that is to be cooked, and not you (mo).

The I- Verb

I- verbs are the second most common Object Focus verbs next to -IN. I- is a prefix, and thus it goes in front of the word. The prefix I- is typically used to mark Object Focus, but I- can also be used to mark beneficiary and instrumental. However, these uses occur less frequently.

Here are a few examples that are in the imperative or command form:

Root Word, Object Focus, Verb Sentence

luto, iluto to cook,

Iluto mo ang isda sa kusina. (You) Cook the fish in the kitchen.

sulat, isulat to write,

Isulat mo ang pangalan mo sa papel. (You) Write your name on the paper.

tago, itago to keep, Itago mo ang sulat. (You) Keep the letter.

sara, isara to close, Isara mo ang pinto. (You) Close the door.

The -AN Verbs

The -AN affix is not used in very many verbs as an object focus marker. There are however a few specific verb roots that use -AN for this purpose. A learner would be advised to memorize the verb roots that take this affix to mark object focus. The most common use of -AN is to mark location/direction-focus.

-AN is suffix, and thus should be placed at the end of a word. When -AN follows a verb root that ends in a vowel, the affix takes the form -HAN.

Here are a few examples:

Root, Object F. Verb, Object Focus Sentence, Converted Actor Focus Sentence

bukas, buksan* to open, Buksan mo ang bintana. Open the window.

Magbukas ka ng bintana. Open the window.

takip, takpan* to cover, Takpan mo ang bibig mo. Cover your mouth.

Magtakip ka ng bibig mo. Cover your mouth.

laba, labhan* to wash, Labhan mo ang damit ni Monica. Wash Monica's dress.

Maglaba ka ng damit ni Monica. Wash Monica's dress.

*These verb have undergone other form changes that are not discussed here.

The MA- Verb

There are certain verbs that use MA- as an object focus marker. These verbs (kita, pansin, alam, etc.) form a special set of verbs because they are always object focused. They can never be actor focused. In some grammar books, these verbs are said to express abilitative and/or accidental mode. Thus, these verbs do not have imperative forms (in other words, they can never be used as commands). Membership of this set is not very large, so learners would be advised to memorize the verb roots that take the MA- affix to indicate object focus.

Here some of the most common MA- verbs:

Root, Object Focus, Verb Sentence

kita, makita to see, Nakita ng bata ang titser. The child saw the teacher.

dinig, marinig* to hear,

Narinig ni Ana ang boses ni Noel. Ana heard Noel's voice.

pansin, mapansin to notice,

Napansin ko ang bagong sapatos ni Maria. I noticed Maria's new shoes.

alam, malaman* to learn/know about smthg. ,

Nalaman ko ang pangalan niya. I learned his name.

Location/Direction Focus (LDF)

The location/direction focus is indicated by the affix -AN/-HAN. Attaching this affix to verb root indicates that the focus of the sentence is a location or the direction of the action. -AN is the only affix used to indicate location/direction focus. It might be easier to remember the connection between -AN and location if you remember that -AN is used generally in the Tagalog language as a location marker. -AN is the prototypical location indicator. For example, the Tagalog word for worship is simba, but if you add -AN to this word to make simbahan the meaning becomes church (the place where you worship). The word tinda means 'to sell,' but if you add -AN to this word to make tindahan the meaning becomes store.

Keep in mind however that ambiguities may arise since -AN can also be used to indicate object-focus and beneficiary-focus as well.

-AN is a suffix and is added to the end of the verb. If the verb ends in a vowel, then an H is added on to -AN to make -HAN.

Here are a few examples of location/direction-focus verbs and sentences: The noun/noun phrase in focus is underlined. The corresponding actor-focus sentences are also provided.

Root,	Loc./Dir. Focus Verb,	Loc./Dir. Focus Sentence,
		Converted Actor Focus Sentence

punta, puntahan to go (to), Puntahan mo ang kaibigan mo (sa palengke).
(You) Go, see your friend (in the market).
Pumunta ka sa kaibigan mo (sa pelengke).
(You) Go, see your friend (in the market).

bigay, bigyan* to give,

Bigyan mo ng pera ang kapatid mo. (You) Give your brother some money.

Magbigay ka ng pera sa kapatid mo. (You) Give some money to your brother.
dala, dalhan* to bring,

Dalhan mo ng prutas si Maria. (You) Bring some fruits to Maria.

Magdala ka ng prutas kay Maria. (You) Bring some fruits to Maria.

lagay, lagyan to put,

Lagyan mo ng bulaklak ang mesa. (You) Put some flowers on the table.

Maglagay ka ng bulaklak sa mesa. (You) Put some flowers on the table.

*These verbs have undergone other form changes not discussed here.

Let's take a look at the second sentence:

Bigyan mo ng pera ang kapatid mo.

give you money brother of you

The AN on the end of the verb tells you that the focus of the sentence (kapatid mo) is the location or direction where the action of the verb (give) will take place. This location is the part of the sentence that is emphasized. Notice that the other words in the sentence are not in focus.

Beneficiary Focus (BF)

There are two affixes that mark the beneficiary focus: IPAG- and -AN. Attaching any of these affixes to a root indicates that the focus of the sentence is the noun for whom/which the action is done. This is different from the object focus. IPAG and -AN mark the focus as the word that receives the benefit of the action. In English, this word that receives the benefit of the action is called the indirect object. Let's take a look at an example in English:

1. Fred gave the car to **Bob**. BENEFICIARY FOCUSED

In English, car is the direct object and Bob is the indirect object. Bob got the benefit from receiving the car. In Tagalog, if the word Bob is the word that is in focus, then the sentence would be Beneficiary Focused.

However, if the word car in this sentence were the focus, then the sentence would be Object Focused in Tagalog:

2. Fred gave the **car** to Bob. OBJECT FOCUSED

As mentioned above, if the benefactor (or indirect object) is the focus then the affix IPAG or -AN is placed in the verb. If the benefactor is not in focus, however, then the benefactor would be marked by PARA SA in front.

IPAG- Verbs

IPAG- is the prototypical beneficiary focus verbal affix. Most of the time, this affix is shortened to I-, especially when the verb root to which it is attached does not have an I- object focus form.

Root,	Benefic. F. Verb,	Beneficiary F. Sentence,
		Converted Actor Focus Sentence

luto,	ipagluto to cook something for someone,
	Ipagluto mo ang nanay ng lumpiya. Cook the egg roll for Mother.
	Magluto ka ng lumpiya para sa nanay. Cook the egg roll for Mother.
handa,	ipaghanda to prepare something for someone,
	Ipaghanda mo si Lina ng damit. Prepare clothes for Lina.
	Maghanda ka ng damit para kay Lina. Prepare clothes for Lina.
laba,	ipaglaba to do laundry for someone,
	Ipaglaba mo ako. Do the laundry for me.
	Maglaba ka para sa akin. Do the laundry for me.
hugas,	ipaghugas to do the dishes for someone,
	Ipaghugas mo siya ng mga plato. Do the dishes for her.
	Maghugas ka ng mga plato para sa kanya. Do the dishes for her.

-AN Verbs

There are some roots that take the affix -AN to form beneficiary focus verbs. Following a word that ends in a vowel, it has the form -HAN. These should not be confused with the location/direction focus forms.

Here are some examples of Beneficiary Focus -AN verbs and sentences:

Root,	Verb,	Beneficiary F. Sentence,	Converted Actor Focus Sentence
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bili,	bilhan to buy something for someone,
	Bilhan mo ang bata ng kendi. Buy the kid a candybar.
	Bumili ka ng kendi para sa bata. Buy a candybar for the kid.
kanta,	kantahan to sing for someone,
	Kantahan mo si Noel ng kundiman. Sing Noel a love song.
	Kumanta ka ng kundiman para kay Noel. Sing a love song for Noel.
luto,	lutuan to cook for someone,
	Lutuan mo siya ng adobo. Cook adobo for him.
	Magluto ka ng adobo para sa kanya. Cook adobo for him.
timpla,	timplahan to prepare a drink for someone,
	Timplahan mo ako ng kape. Prepare coffee for me.

Magtimpla ka ng kape para sa akin. Prepare coffee for me.

Instrumental-Focus (IF) Verbs.

Attaching the affix IPANG- to a root word always means that the focus of the verb is the instrument of the action. IPANG- indicates that the focus of the sentence is a tool that is used to accomplish the action of the verb. Here is an example:

I opened the can with the **can opener**.

In this sentence the can opener was the instrument that was used to open the can.

This affix may also be shortened to I-. A beginning learner would be advised to use IPANG- so as not to confuse it with other I-verbs that express different focuses. IPANG- is a prefix and is always placed in the front of the word. Here are some examples:

Root,	Instrumental F. Verb,	Instrumental Focus Sentence,	Converted Actor Focus Sentence
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hampas,	ipanghampas	to use something to hit something,	
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	Ipanghampas	mo ng langaw ang papel.	Use the paper to hit the fly.
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	Humampas	ka ng langaw sa pamamagitan ng papel.	Hit the fly with the paper.
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linis,	ipanlinis*	to use something to clean something,	
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	Ipanlinis	mo ng sahig ang basahan.	Use the rag to clean the floor.
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	Maglinis	ka ng sahig sa pamamagitan ng basahan.	Clean the floor with the rag.
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talop,	ipantalop*	to use something to peel something,	
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	Ipantalop	mo ng kamote ang kutsilyo.	Use the knife to peel sweet potatoes.
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	Magtalop	ka ng kamote sa pamamagitan ng kutsilyo.	
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		Peel the sweet potatoes with the knife.	
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*These form have undergone other morphological changes that are not discussed here.

Note that when the instrument is the focus, it is marked by ang, etc. (as is the case with all words in focus). However, if the instrument is not in focus, it is marked by SA PAMAMAGITAN, as can be seen in the converted actor focus sentences.

Putting the pieces together

Part A

Let's take a look at some more examples of verbal focus.

Pumatay ng elepante ang dentista.

Killed (Actor focused) the elephant the dentist.

translation: The dentist killed the elephant.

This is an actor focused sentence. The ang tells you that dentista is the focus, and the -um- in pumatay tells you that the focus is the actor in the sentence.

Notice that if I switch the markers in this sentence, I change the meaning

Pumatay ang elepante ng dentista.

Killed (Actor focused) the elephant the dentist.

translation: The elephant killed the dentist.

Now the elephant is in focus and the affix -um- tells you that the elephant is doing the action.

Let's say that you want to keep the focus on the elephant, but you don't want the meaning of your original sentence to change (the dentist killed the elephant). What you need to do is to keep elephant as the focus but make the verb an object focus verb. That way the elephant will still be in focus, but it will still be the one getting killed (and not the one doing the killing).

Pinatay ng dentista ang elepante.

Killed (Object focused) the dentist the elephant.

translation: The dentist killed the elephant.

The elephant is the focus, and the in in pinatay is an object focus affix that tells you that the focus is the one receiving the action of the verb.

Now let's take another look at the first sentence we looked at and the most recent sentence above:

Pumatay ng elepante ang dentista. The dentist killed the elephant.

Pinatay ng dentista ang elepante. The dentist killed the elephant.

Notice that the translations of these sentences in English are both the same. If the meaning that I want to convey is that the dentist killed the elephant why would I need two different ways to say the same thing? Why would I ever want to change the focus of my sentence? What difference does it make?

This is good chance to learn more about focus in Tagalog. As has been mentioned, the word that is in focus in Tagalog is the most prominent word in the sentence. You can think of it as being in the spotlight. That this use of focus is very important in Tagalog can be seen from the following:

If I were asked the question:

Who killed the elephant? Sino ang pumatay ng elepante?

I would need to answer with the first sentence:

Pumatay ng elepante ang dentista.

(Or, using the same format: Ang dentista ang pumatay ng elepante).

You see that because you want to know who did the killing, you must therefore have the word doing the killing in focus.

If I were asked the question:

What did the dentist kill? Ano ang pinatay ng dentista?

I would need to answer with the second sentence:

Pinatay ng dentista ang elepante.

Here you are talking about what it was that was killed, therefore the elephant should be in focus.

Q. Sino ang pumatay ng elepante? (Who killed the elephant?)

Q. Ano ang pinatay ng dentista? (What did the dentist kill?)

A. Ang dentista ang pumatay ng elepante. (The dentist killed the elephant.)

A. Pinatay ng dentista ang elepante. (The dentist killed the elephant.)

To answer the question Sino ang pumatay ng elepante? with the answer Pinatay ng dentista ang elepante is awkward and perhaps even grammatically incorrect. It sounds like you misunderstood the question.

The same is true for answering the question Ano ang pinatay ng dentista? with the answer Ang dentista ang pumatay ng elepante.

Part B

Let's take a look at a sentence that will be used as an example to show changes in focus. Please note that for the purposes of illustration we have crafted some artificial sentences. Do not expect to hear this kind of sentence outside of laboratory conditions. In addition to the fact that the event in this sentence would be (at least) fairly unlikely to occur in real life, Tagalog verbs tend to shift their meaning a little when they take on a different focus affix. These sentences are merely meant to help demonstrate the way Tagalog focus works.

Actor Focus

This first sentence is an Actor Focus sentence. The bold section in the English translation represents that part of the sentence that the English speaker would emphasize by way of vocal stress. Although it might be structured differently in real life, the format used in this sentence would be a good answer to the question Who hit the cow for the governor?

Nagbanat ng baka **ang** polis sa pamamagitan ng guantes para sa gobernador.
Hit (Actor Focused) the cow the policeman with a glove for the governor.
translation: The policeman hit the cow with a glove for the governor.

Object Focus

Now let's change the focus to Object Focus. You would see a sentence in this focus for a question that asked What did the police hit?

Binanat ng polis **ang** baka sa pamamagitan ng guantes para sa gobernador.
Hit (Object Focused) the policeman the cow with a glove for the governor.
translation: The policeman hit the cow with a glove for the governor.

Location/Direction Focus

Now let's change this to Location Focus. This sentence would be a good answer to the question: Where did the policeman direct his hit?

Binanatan ng polis **ang** baka sa pamamagitan ng guantes para sa gobernador.
Hit (Location Focused) the policeman the cow with a glove for the governor.
translation: The policeman hit (on) the cow with a glove for the governor.

Beneficiary Focus

Now let's change this sentence to Beneficiary Focus. This sentence would be a good answer to the question: For whom did the policeman hit the cow? (Or, more commonly nowadays Who did the policeman hit the cow for?)

Ipinagbanat ng polis ng baka sa pamamagitan ng guantes **ang** gobernador.
Hit (Beneficiary Focused) the policeman the cow with a glove for the governor.
translation: The policeman hit the cow with a glove for the governor.

Notice in this sentence that you must tell from context (although admittedly with my sentences it might be hard) that the policeman was the one who hit the cow.

Don't make the mistake of thinking that the policeman hit the governor in this sentence. It sounds that way to the English speaker. But remember that the affix Ipag- comes packaged with the idea that the action of the verb is being done for the focus of the sentence.

Instrumental Focus

Now let's change this sentence to Instrumental Focus. This sentence would be a good answer to the question: What did the policeman hit the cow with?

Ipinangbanat ng polis ng baka **ang** guantes para sa gobernador.

Hit (Instrumental Focused) the policeman the cow the glove for the governor.
translation: The policeman hit the cow with a glove for the governor.

Again, please don't make the mistake of translating this sentence as The policeman of the cow hit the glove for the governor, or some other horrific thing like that. We know that ang guantes comes packaged with the idea of it being used as a tool because of the affix Ipang-.

Once again, you must tell from context that the police was the one who hit the cow, and not the other way around.