

# Morphological Conservatism in Enggano subordinate clauses

Erik Zobel, Charlotte Hemmings & Mary Dalrymple

SLE 24<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> August 2022

# Introduction

- This paper presents a case study of verbal morphology in **Enggano**, an Austronesian language spoken on Enggano Island, Sumatra.
- We argue that subordinate clauses in Enggano retain an **ergative alignment** pattern that is no longer evidenced elsewhere in the grammar but reflects the alignment type generally assumed for more conservative Austronesian languages (see Aldridge 2021)
- This is in keeping with the cross-linguistic trend for subordinate clauses to be more conservative than main clauses (Bybee 2002)

# Introduction

- However, the patterns make Enggano typologically unusual since there is a general trend in cases of **split ergativity** towards accusative alignment in subordinate clauses and ergative alignment in main clauses (see discussion in Otsuka 2000)
- Indeed, this is the pattern found in other Austronesian languages with split ergativity, e.g.
  - Duri (Matti 1994)
  - Mori Bawah (Esser & Mead 2011)
  - Southern Nias (Brown 2001)

# Introduction

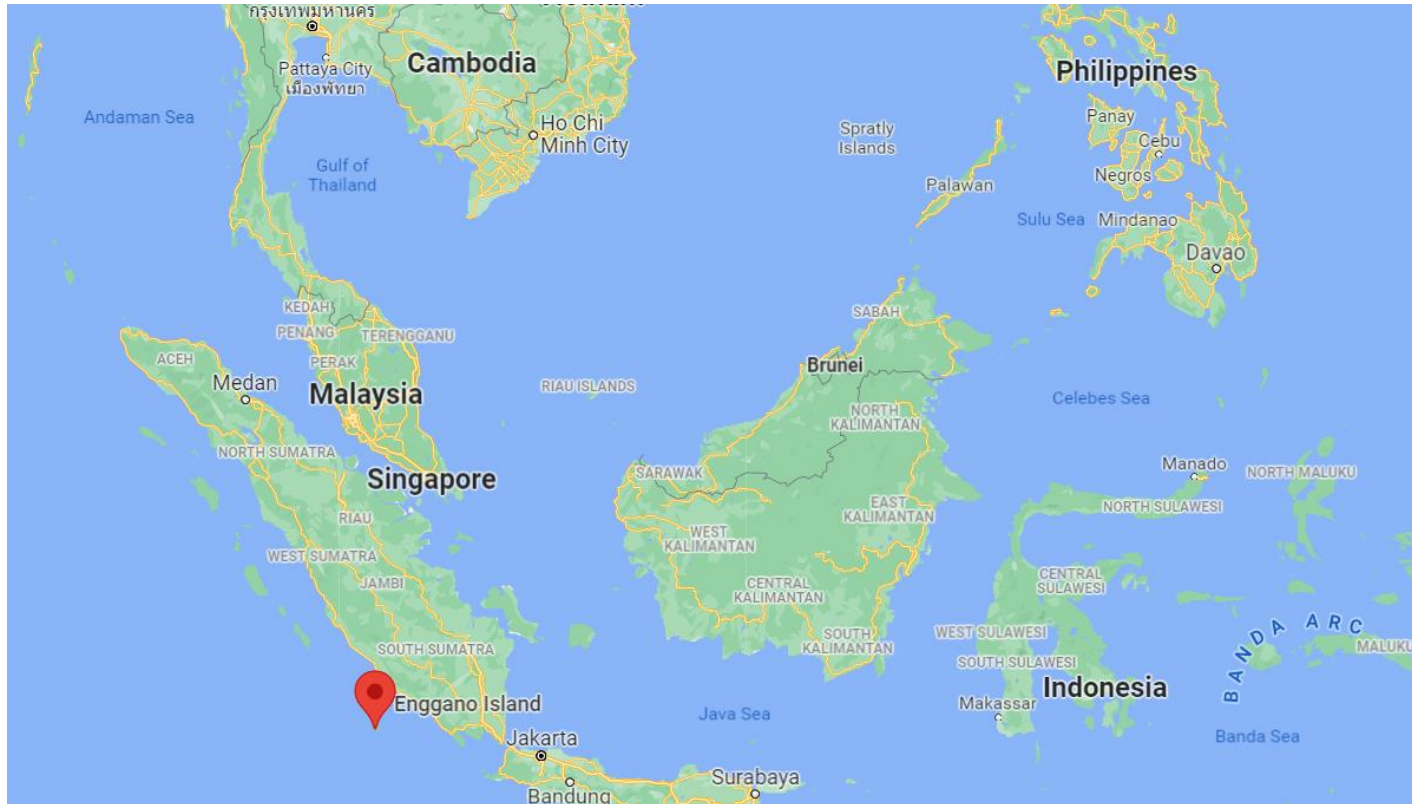
- As a result, we argue that Enggano split-ergativity results from **specific historical developments** that have important implications for our understanding of the possible developments of Austronesian voice morphology.
- Our analysis provides further support for the idea that **synchronic patterns** arise as the result of **particular historical processes** that may affect different types of subordinate clause in different ways (cf. Dixon 1994).

# Roadmap

- Background on Enggano
- Split-ergativity in Enggano
- Split-ergativity in Austronesian
- Historical Developments in Enggano
- Conclusions

# Background on Enggano

# Background on Enggano



- Enggano is spoken on Enggano Island, Sumatra, Indonesia
- There is some debate around sub-grouping but most people now agree that Enggano is **Austronesian** (Dyen 1965, Nothofer 1986, Edwards 2015, Smith 2017, 2020, McDonnell & Billings 2022)

# Background on Enggano

1850-1900	Early Wordlists	Von Rosenberg 1855, Van der Straaten & Severijn 1855, Walland 1864, Oudemans 1879 Helfrich & Pieters 1891, Helfrich 1893, 1916
1930s	Hans Kähler	Grammar Sketch (Kähler 1940) Text Collection (Kähler 1955, 1957, 1958, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1964, 1975) Dictionary (Kähler 1987, published posthumously)
1980s-2020s	Recent Work	Nothofer (1986), Nikelas et al (1994), Yoder (2011) Wijaya (2018), Butters (2021), Riswari et al (2021)
2018-present	AHRC-funded documentation project	Corpus of audio and video recordings (Meok) Swadesh lists from across the villages Grammar, FLEX database of glossed texts and lexicon



# Split-ergativity in Enggano

# Alignment

- Typically, alignment is identified by comparing S, A and O
- While Enggano has overt case marking of NPs, no alignment pattern is visible here since the core arguments S/A/O all take the direct case marker *e-*.
- Nevertheless, alignment is visible in the person marking of verbs and in the syntactic pivot of relative clauses and embedded constructions.
- Here, a split-ergative pattern emerges: in most contexts, there is **nominative agreement**, but one subordinate clause type displays **ergative person marking**.

# Person Marking

	Set 1	Set 2
1SG	'u-	'u-
2SG	'o-	u-
3SG	ka-	i-
1PL.INCL	ka-	ka-
1PL.EXCL	'u- -'ai	'u- -'ai
2PL	'o- -a'a	u- -a'a
3PL	da-/di-/ki-	da-

Verbal Marker	Function
ki-	relative clauses
bu-	main clauses, embedded
bare	negation, imperative, consecutive/purposive

<b>bu- + SET 1</b>	<b>NOM1</b>
<b>bare + SET 2</b>	<b>NOM2</b>

# Main Clauses (NOM1)

- In the most basic clause type, the verb indexes S and A with a person-marking prefix from Set 1, followed by the prefix *bu-*:

(1a) **Transitive**

**ka-***bu-pəa=da'a*

3<sub>1</sub>-BU-see=EMPH

'His niece saw the spear' (Kähler 1975:62)

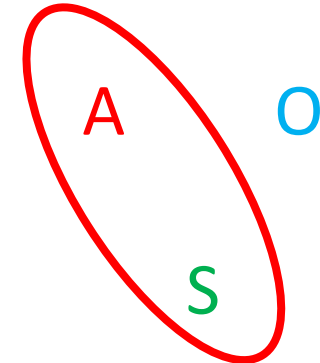
*e=dahao-dia*

DIR=niece-3s.GEN

*e-ka'a:i'io*

DIR=spear

Accusative



(1b) **Intransitive**

**ka-***bu-puaka=ha*

3<sub>1</sub>-BU-depart=PRED

'So the elders went off' (Kähler 1975:56)

*ka=kakina'ama*

PL=elder

# Main Clauses (NOM2)

- In other contexts – particularly following negation - the verb indexes S and A with a person-marking prefix of Set 2 that attaches to the bare stem

## (2a) Transitive

*kau=pe* *i-paka'aua'a* *ka=po'inamo* *e=puaha* *u=kaka* *e'ana*  
 NEG=yet 3<sub>II</sub>-know PL-maiden DIR=look OBL=person that

'The maidens didn't know yet the appearance of the person.'

(Kähler 1940:103)

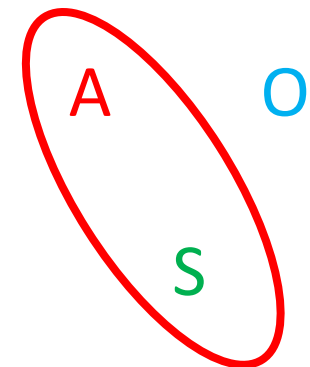
## (2b) Intransitive

*ka* *keaba'a* *y-a'u'ua* *e=kidei-da* *e'ana*  
 and NEG 3<sub>II</sub>-good DIR=belly-3s.GEN that

'They did not agree' (lit. 'there belly was not good')

(Kähler 1975:54)

Accusative



# Relative Clauses

- Relativization supports the identification of an S/A pivot.
- When S and A are relativized, the prefix *ki-* is added without further modification to the stem:

## (3a) Transitive

*e=apama*      *u=kaka*      *mo'o*      *ki-'ope*      *kia*      *e'ana*  
 DIR=number    OBL=person    REL    FOC-ambush    3SG    that

'the number of the people who lay in ambush for him' (Kähler 1975:61)

## (3b) Intransitive

*e=kapu*      *mo'o*      *k-ai*      *ne'eni*      *e'ana*  
 DIR= clan leader    REL    FOC-come    earlier    that

'the clan leader who had come earlier' (Kähler 1975:60)

# Relative Clauses

- When O is relativised, the verb is typically put into a nominalization construction.

## (3c) Transitive

*e-huda*      *e'ana*   *mo'o*   *e-di-pèa*      *ama-nai*  
 DIR-woman    DEM    REL    DIR-PASS-see    father-1PL.EXCL.POSS  
 'The woman who was seen by you ('our father')' (Kähler 1957: 153)

ki-      edi-  
 ki-

S/A pivot = Accusative

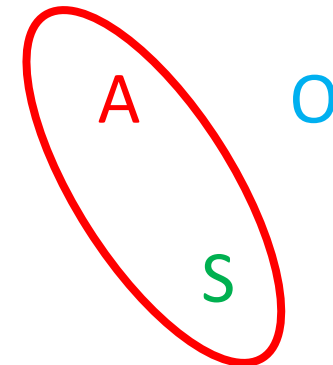
# Consecutive/Purposive Clauses

- There is also an S/A pivot in embedded constructions following motion verbs
- The controlled argument is either S or A and the embedded verb begins with *ba-* and no subject agreement:

## (4a) Transitive

*ki*      *k-aha* [*be-ipu*      —      *e=hopu*      *e'ana*]  
 3pl      FOC-go    INF-fell      DIR=breadfruit    that  
 'they went to fell the breadfruit tree' (Kähler 1958:188)

Accusative



## (4b) Intransitive

*ka-hii* *b-ahae-ha* *e-huda*      *e'ana hii*      *ka-pae* *k-ahae-a* [*ba-eke*      —]  
 3-REP    BU-go-EMPH    DIR-woman    DEM    and    PL-child    FOC-go-FUT    INF-wash  
 'Then that woman again went away with the children, in order to bathe'  
 (Kähler 1958: 182)



# Consecutive/Purposes Clauses

- There is also an S/A pivot in embedded purposive constructions
- The controlled argument is either S or A and the embedded verb is marked with *aba-* and Set 2 subject agreement:

## (4a) Transitive

*ka-b-ai-xa*                      *ama ka-pae*                      *e'ana [y-aba-pèa ki]*  
 3-BU-come-EMPH            father PL-child                      DEM    3-CNS-see            3PL

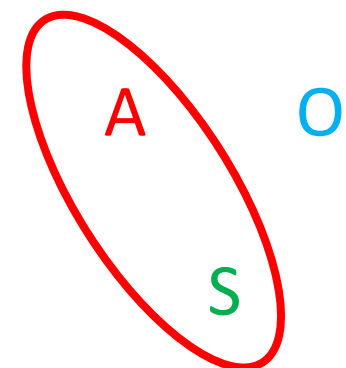
'The father of the children came, in order to see them' (Kähler 1957: 154)

## (4b) Intransitive

*ka-b-ahae-ha*                      *[y-aba-kiu-ha*                      *i-tita]*  
 3-BU-go-EMPH                      3-CNS-hide-emph                      loc-there

'It<sub>u</sub> went there and sought shelter there' (Kähler 1955: 90)

Accusative



# Summary

Main clauses with bu-	Set 1 agreement with S/A
Bare clauses following negation	Set 2 agreement with S/A
Relativisation	S/A pivot
Purposive clauses	S/A pivot

Alignment = Accusative

# Subordinate Clauses (a=)

- In subordinate clauses headed by *a=* 'when, if' and *be* 'because', we find ergatively-aligned person marking: transitive verbs take Set 2 agreement on the bare stem, intransitive verbs take the prefix *bu-* without person-marking:

(5a) **Transitive**

*a=da-dohoi*

CONJ=3<sub>pl</sub>.pl -hear

*e=di-'ua-dia*

DIR=PASS=say-3sg.GEN

'when they heard what he had said' (Kähler 1975:80)

(5b) **Intransitive**

*a=b-ai*

CONJ=BU-come

*ki*

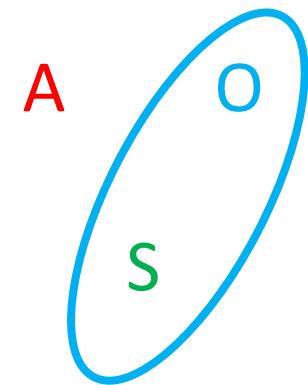
3pl

*na'ani*

later

'when they will come later' (Kähler 1975:32)

Ergative



# Subordinate Clauses (be)

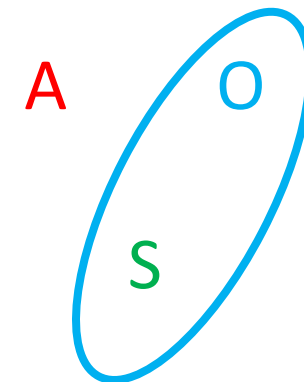
(6a) **Transitive**

*mě*                      *na-noo-a*                      *e-ũ'ã*                      *i-ka'udara*                      *e'ana*  
 because                      3pl-eat-fut                      dir-food                      loc-village                      dem  
 'because they would eat the food in that village' (Kähler 1962: 141)

(6b) **Intransitive**

*be*                      *bu-pua*                      *kia*                      *i'ioo'ou*  
 because                      bu-run                      3sg                      from.1sg  
 'because it has fled from me' (Kähler 1955: 90)

Ergative



# Summary

Main clauses with <i>bu-</i>	Set 1 agreement with S/A	Accusative
Bare clauses following negation	Set 2 agreement with S/A	Accusative
Relativisation	S/A pivot	Accusative
Purposive clauses	S/A pivot	Accusative
Subordinate clauses	Set 2 agreement with A S/O unmarked	Ergative

Split Ergativity according to clause type

# (Split)-Ergativity in Austronesian

# Austronesian Alignment

- Comparison with other Austronesian languages shows that the **ergative alignment** pattern found in Enggano subordinate a=/be clauses is the original basic clause type.
- The argument follows from the fact that conservative (“Philippine-type”) Austronesian languages with symmetrical voice treat **Undergoer Voice** as the basic clause type (Kikusawa 2017, Kaufman 2017).
- It also follows from the fact that many Austronesian languages in Sumatra and Sulawesi have developed **ergatively-aligned person marking** (Zobel forthcoming).

# Philippine-type Symmetrical Voice

- Conservative Austronesian languages like **Tagalog** have a series of symmetrical voice alternations.

## (7a) Actor Voice

K<um>ain      ako      ng=isda  
 <AV.PFV>eat 1SG.NOM      GEN=fish  
 'I ate (a) fish/fishes'.

- Both AV and UV are **transitive**
- In AV, A = pivot
- In UV, O = pivot

## (7b) Undergoer Voice

K<in>ain      ko      ang=isda  
 <UV.PFV>eat 1SG.GEN      NOM=fish  
 'I ate the fish/the fishes'. (Latrouite 2011: 190)



# Philippine-type Symmetrical Voice

- Assessing alignment in Austronesian is complicated by the existence of multiple transitive clause types



- Following Kroeger (1993, 2004) and Janic & Hemmings (2021), alignment can be identified using a functional markedness approach
  - If uv is functionally unmarked then alignment = ergative
  - If av is functionally unmarked then alignment = accusative

# Philippine-type Symmetrical Voice

- Conservative Austronesian languages like **Tagalog** have a series of symmetrical voice alternations.

## (7a) Actor Voice

K<um>ain      ako      ng=isda  
<AV.PFV>eat    1SG.NOM      GEN=fish  
'I ate (a) fish/fishes'.

## (7b) Undergoer Voice

K<in>ain      ko      ang=isda  
<UV.PFV>eat    1SG.GEN      NOM=fish  
'I ate the fish/the fishes'. (Latrouite 2011: 190)

- AV is associated with **antipassive-like** semantics
- AV is considerably less frequent in discourse (see Hemmings 2021)

UV = unmarked  
alignment = ergative

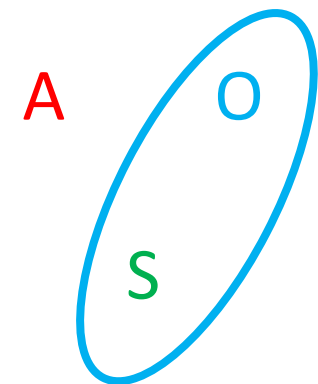
# Ergatively-aligned Person Marking

- **Northern Nias** (Sumatra) has ergative agreement with A on transitive verbs, and has also developed ergative alignment in case-marking since A is unmarked, whilst S/O is marked via mutation of the onset (Sundermann 1913:16; Brown 2001:69)

(8a) **Transitive**

*ba* *i-a* *ono* *gö-nia*  
 CONJ 3sg-eat child MUT:food-3sg.GEN  
 'and the child ate her [=the ghost's] food'

Ergative



(8b) **Intransitive**

*no* *mofanö* *n-ina-gu*  
 PRF go.away MUT=mother-3sg.GEN  
 'my mother has gone away' (Sundermann 1892:346)

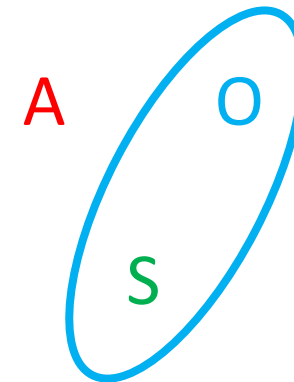
# Ergatively-aligned Person Marking

- **Toba Batak** (Sumatra) has ergative agreement with A on transitive verbs but no marking in intransitive clauses:

(9a) **Transitive**  
*hu*-*buat*      *do*      *bukku*  
 1sg-take      PRED      book  
 'I took the book' (Percival 1981:89)

(9b) **Intransitive**  
*mijur*      *do*      *au*  
 go.down      PRED      1sg  
 'I went down' (Percival 1981:89)

Ergative



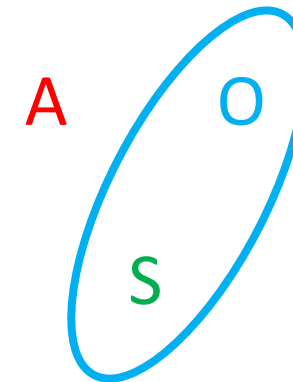
# Ergatively-aligned Person Marking

- **Makasar** (South Sulawesi) has obligatory ergative person markers with transitive verbs. It also has absolutive enclitics indexes S/O:

(10a) **Transitive**  
*na=kanre=i i=Ali unti-ku*  
 3-eat=3 PN=Ali banana-1sg.GEN  
 'Ali eats my banana' (Jukes 2019:233)

(10b) **Intransitive**  
*A'lampa=i i=Ali*  
 go=3 PN=Ali  
 'Ali goes' (Jukes 2019:233)

Ergative



# Interim Summary

- Patterns from Philippine-type languages, as well as the development of ergative case marking in Sumatra and Sulawesi, support analysing the Enggano subordinate clause alignment as the **more conservative** type.

Philippine-type languages	UV = basic/unmarked	Ergative
Northern Nias	Erg agreement with A S/O mutation	Ergative
Toba Batak	Erg agreement with A S/O unmarked	Ergative
Makasar	Erg agreement with A Abs enclitics with S/O	Ergative

# Split-Ergativity in Austronesian

- Interestingly, Enggano is not alone in developing **split-ergativity**. What makes it unusual is that other systems tend to have ergative alignment in main clauses and accusative alignment elsewhere.
- This is more common cross-linguistically (see e.g. Otsuka 2000) and also the attested pattern in other languages of the region:

Type 1	<b>ERG</b> in main clauses, <b>NOM2</b> in consecutive clauses	e.g. Duri
Type 2	<b>ERG</b> in main clauses, <b>NOM2</b> in consecutive clauses, <b>NOM1</b> as in marked (irrealis) main clause-types	e.g. Mori Bawah, Southern Nias

# Duri (South Sulawesi) - ERG

- In basic clauses, Duri person-marking is identical to that found in Makasar, with indexing of A with person-marking proclitics, and S and O with enclitics:

(10a) **Transitive**

*ku-ita=ko*

1SG-see=2SG

'I see you' (Matti 1994:73)

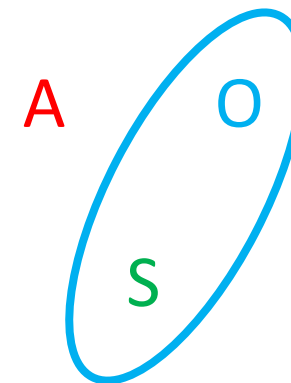
(10b) **Intransitive**

*torro=na' yao Tanete*

dwel=1SG LOC Tanete

'I live in Tanete' (Matti 1994:69)

Ergative





# Duri (South Sulawesi) – NOM2

- In consecutive clauses, S/A are indexed by proclitics. The enclitic set only marks O

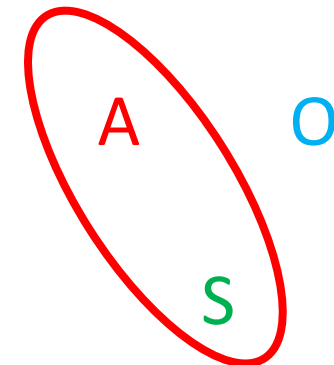
## (10c) Transitive

*umba=mo=ko*                      *ampo*                      *an-ku-kande=i*                      *ate-mu*  
 where=PRF=2sg                      grandchild                      CNS-1sg-eat=3sg                      liver-2sg  
 ‘Where are you grandchild? So that I can eat your liver’ (Matti 1994:78)

## (10d) Intransitive

*mai=mo=ko*                      *an-ta-ao*  
 come=PRF=2sg CNS-1pl.in-go  
 ‘Come here and we’ll go’ (Matti 1994:78)

Accusative



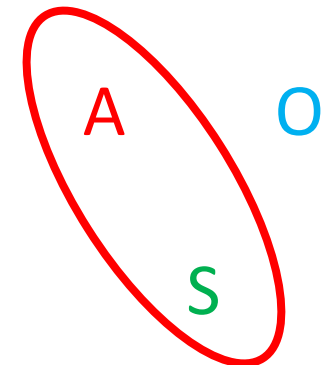
# Mori Bawah (Bungku-Tolaki) – NOM1

- Mori Bawah has an ERG pattern in main clauses, as well as a NOM2 pattern in consecutive clauses. However, like Enggano, it also has an accusatively-aligned NOM1 pattern in main clauses with **future** interpretation (Esser & Mead 2011):

(11a) **Transitive**

**aku**-<um>ala-o      ari      ongkue      i      Bonti-bonti  
 1sg-UM -take=3sg      first      1sg      PN      Little.Wild.Pig  
 'I will take Little Wild Pig' (Esser & Mead 2011:119)

Accusative



(11b) **Intransitive**

**aku**-l<um>ako      i      ToBungku  
 1sg-UM -go      PN      Bungku  
 'I will go to Bungku' (Esser & Mead 2011:423)

# Southern Nias (Sumatra)

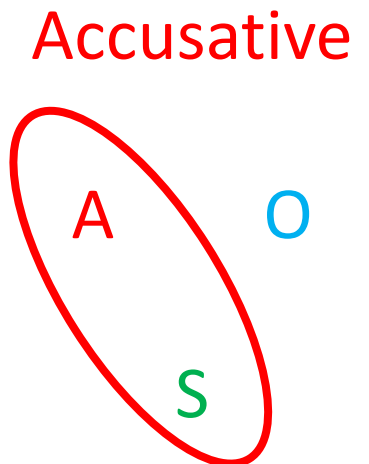
- In Southern Nias, the clause type with NOM1-type person-marking is described by Brown (2001) as denoting *irrealis* mood:

(12a) **Transitive**

**ya-m-balö**                      **gefe**                      *Ama Dali*  
 3sg-UM-borrow                      MUT:money                      Ama Dali  
 'Ama Dali wants to borrow money' (Brown 2001:502)

(12b) **Intransitive**

*haega*                      **gu-t<um>ataro**  
 where                      1sg-UM-sit  
 'Where will I sit?' (Brown 2001:504)



# Summary

	Ergative (ERG)	Accusative (NOM1)	Accusative (NOM2)
Enggano	subordinate clauses with a=/be	basic main clauses	after negation consecutive clauses
Duri	basic main clauses	not attested	consecutive clauses
Mori Bawah	basic main clauses	future main clauses	after negation consecutive clauses
Southern Nias	basic main clauses	irrealis main clauses	consecutive clauses

# Historical Developments

# Development of Enggano

- **Stage 1: Philippine-type** (Tagalog)
  - actor voice marked by *\*-um-*, no person marking (used for lower transitivity clauses)
  - undergoer voice marked by *\*-in-*, *\*-en*, no person marking (used for basic main clauses)

# Development of Enggano

- **Stage 2 Development of ERG** (Northern Nias, Toba Batak, Makasar)
  - actor voice *\*-um-* marks intransitive clauses (preserved in some transitive clauses, e.g. infinitival embedded clauses, extraction)
  - undergoer voice *\*-in-*, *\*-en* restricted to nominalisations
  - An innovative transitive construction develops with proclitic person markers attached to a bare verb stem (dependent UV form)
- This is assumed to derive from the reanalysis of fronted genitive enclitics after auxiliaries (Wolff 1996)



- It is shared with numerous languages of Western Indonesia (Wolff 1996, 2002, Himmelmann 1996, Ross 2002, Zobel 2002, forthcoming)

# Development of Enggano

- **Stage 3: Development of NOM2 pattern (Duri)**

- In addition to the inherited pattern with *-um-*, certain intransitive clauses innovate person marking + bare verb stem on analogy with the transitive pattern.



- This is restricted to the context of purposive/consecutive clauses which makes sense given that control is often associated with an S/A pivot (see Falk 2006, Dixon 1994)
- This innovation is not as widespread but widely distributed (see e.g. Wolff 2002, Zobel forthcoming)



# Development of Enggano

- **Stage 4: Development of NOM1 pattern** (Mori Bawah)
  - The stage 3 system is expanded with an innovative clause that combines proclitic person marking with a verb stem marked with *-um-*
- In Mori Bawah, proclitic person markers in NOM1 constructions are virtually identical to the post-verbal subject pronouns in intransitive clauses.
- For this reason, Mead (1998:340) argued that they derived from complex clauses with an intransitive matrix verb (e.g. 'want', 'go') followed by *-um-* complement



# Development of Enggano

- In Mori Bawah and Southern Nias, the **NOM1** construction is restricted to **marked constructions** (future, irrealis). The **ERG** construction that developed from dependent UV forms is used as the basic clause type.
- In Enggano, **NOM1** most likely started as a marked construction too. We do not know if it marked future/irrealis but can assume that it was **incompatible with a=/be subordinate clauses**.
- At some stage, the innovative **NOM1** construction then takes on the function of expressing basic main clauses – leaving **ERG** restricted to these subordinate clauses.

# Summary

- We assume Enggano to have undergone changes attested in many other languages of Western Indonesia – including the development of person marking for **A** (resulting in **ergative alignment**) and the extension of this pattern to intransitive **S** (resulting in split-ergativity with **NOM2**).
- In addition to these common changes, we assume Enggano also innovated a **NOM1** construction that was (at some stage) incompatible with subordinate clauses of the a=/be type. **NOM1** was subsequently extended to mark basic main clauses (resulting in the unusual pattern of **split-ergativity**)
- **Why** this happens in Enggano is a question for future research!

# Conclusions

# Conclusion

- In this paper, we have shown that Enggano subordinate clauses with *a*= ‘if/when’ and *be* ‘because’ retain an **ergative alignment pattern** that is not found elsewhere in the grammar.
- We have argued that this represents the more **conservative pattern** on the basis that (1) conservative (“Philippine-type”) languages treat UV as basic and hence can be treated as having ergative alignment and (2) several languages of Sumatra and Sulawesi have innovated **ergatively-aligned person marking**.
- In this way, Enggano fits with the cross-linguistic trend for subordinate clauses to be **more conservative** than main clauses (e.g. Bybee 2002)

# Conclusion

- Paradoxically, however, this makes Enggano typologically unusual given the tendency for split-ergative systems to have **ergative alignment** in main clauses and **accusative alignment** in subordinate clauses – which we illustrated in several languages of the region.
- We proposed that the **unusual synchronic status** of Enggano came about as the result of specific historical changes.
- Hence, we argued that Enggano verbal morphology supports the idea that synchronic patterns arise as the result of **particular historical processes** that may affect different types of subordinate clause in different ways (cf. Dixon 1994).



Arts and  
Humanities  
Research Council



# With thanks to...

## The Enggano Community





# With thanks to...

I Wayan Arka, Australian National University

Dendi Wijaya, Kantor Bahasa Bengkulu

Engga Zakaria Sangian, Universitas Dehasen Bengkulu







# With thanks to...

Bernd Nothofer, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main  
Daniel Krause, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main

Colleagues at Udayana University, Bali

Arts and Humanities Research Council UK  
The John Fell Fund, University of Oxford  
The Endangered Language Fund

Audience at SLE!

# Split Alignment in Contemporary Enggano

- In the most basic clause type, the verb indexes S and A with a person-marking prefix from Set 1, followed by the prefix *bu-*:

## (1a) Transitive

**ka-***bu-pakahre*

3<sub>I</sub>-BU-kill

*pa*

child

*ean*

DEM

*i-ab-a'a*

3<sub>II</sub>-ABA-die

'and he killed the child so that it died' (Kähler 1955 retelling)

## (1b) Intransitive

*e-ko'oe'*

NM-devil

*ean*

DEM

**ka-***mu-na'au*

3<sub>I</sub>-BU-climb

*i-ah*

3-go

*hě'*

top

*ku*

tree

*enaka ean*

tree-sp DEM

'The devil again climbed into the treetop of the enaka-tree'

# Split Alignment in Contemporary Enggano

- In subordinate clauses with *a=* we still see the ERG pattern...

## (1a) Transitive

*a=***u**-*pü*      *bak*      *bè*      *ean*

when=1<sub>II</sub>-see eye water DEM

'If I look at the spring...' (Bakblau)

## (1b) Intransitive

*na'an* *a=b-ahar*      *ki*

later when=BU-wake 3SG

'later when he wakes...' (Kähler 1955 retelling)