

Morphological conservatism in Enggano subordinate clauses

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This paper presents a case study of verbs in Enggano (Austronesian, Sumatra, Indonesia), which occur in one of three basic forms: *ki-* form, *bu-* form and bare form. The *bu-* prefix is thought to derive from PAN **-um-*, which marks actor voice (Edwards 2015: 74), whilst bare forms are reflexes of inherited verbs in undergoer voice (at least for transitive verbs). In conservative Austronesian languages, the actor voice construction is analysed as an intransitive construction, whilst undergoer voice is the basic transitive construction. This is used to support an ergative analysis of Austronesian morphosyntax (see e.g. Aldridge 2021). In Enggano main clauses, *bu-* and bare forms do not mark voice alternations; they simply occur in different contexts: *bu-* verbs occur with set 1 (NOM) subject agreement markers, and bare verbs occur with set 2 (ERG) subject agreement markers following negation. This applies for both transitive verbs, as in (1), and intransitive verbs:

- (1) a. ka-**bu**-pudu-ha epaE e'ana *bu*-form
 3SG.NOM-**bu**-kill-EMPH child DEM.MED
 'and he killed the child' (Kähler 1955:90)
- b. kea-ba'a i-pudu e-koꝯo e'ana bare form
 NEG-INTENSIVE **3**.ERG-kill DIR-pig DEM.MED
 'He didn't kill the pig' (Kähler 1940:101)

Both structures have accusative alignment, therefore, in the sense that transitive and intransitive subjects are both flagged with agreement.

Interestingly, Enggano preserves the more conservative, ergative-style syntax in embedded clauses. In subordinate clauses beginning with *be* 'because' and *a=* 'if, when', *bu-* forms are used in intransitive clauses, whilst bare verbs with set 2 (ERG) agreement markers are used for transitive clauses:

- (2) a. a=**b**-ai ka-ʔano-ka *bu*-form = intransitive
 CONJ=**bu**-come PL-friend-1PL.INCL.POSS
 'when our friends come' (Kähler 1975:32)
- b. a=**y**-a'ioi-xa 'ika! bare form = transitive
 CONJ=**3**.ERG-follow-EMPH 1PL.INCL
 '(then) it will follow us' (Kähler 1955:89)

This could be considered to reflect an ergative pattern since the transitive agent receives agreement on the verb, whilst the transitive patient and intransitive subject do not. Given that the ergative pattern is characteristic of conservative Austronesian languages, this suggests that Enggano may

provide another example of the cross-linguistic trend for subordinate clauses to be more conservative than main clauses (e.g. Bybee 2002).

This would make Enggano similar to languages in Sulawesi, such as Muna, where reflexes of erstwhile voice markers show up only in relative clauses (van den Berg 1995). However, it makes 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). This is indeed the case for other Austronesian languages with split-ergativity, like Chamorro, Buginese and Mori Bawah (Zobel 2002, Laskowske 2011, Mead 2005). Consequently, the Enggano case has important implications for our understanding of the possible developments of Austronesian voice morphology, and may provide 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).

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