

# A short overview of Enggano basic morphology and syntax (with comparative and diachronic notes)

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## 1. Introduction

This sketch presents selected aspects of the basic morphology and syntax of Enggano as spoken in the first half of the 20th century (“Old Enggano”), based on Kähler’s grammatical sketch from 1940 and an analysis of the texts in Kähler’s collection *Texte von der Insel Enggano* (1975).<sup>1</sup> Note that at this stage, the analysis is still preliminary, since I have not yet gone through the remaining text corpus published by Kähler.

The comparative notes are based on Kähler (1940), Edwards (2015) and my own research.

## 2. Noun morphology

Most nouns can be marked for three cases:

default case:	<i>e=</i>
genitive case:	<i>u=</i>
locative case:	<i>i=</i>

Locative case (LOC) marks spatial relations. Genitive case (GEN) is used for adnominal possessors, the actor (S/A) in nominalizations, the undergoer argument of semi-transitive verbs, and following the complex oblique marker *iʔioo* (most probably *i= + ʔoo*, cf. the short variant *ʔo*). Default case (DFT) is used in all other contexts, e.g. in citation, in topicalized position, for core arguments (A+O with transitive verbs; S with intransitive verbs) and appositional modifiers, and following the preposition *hii* ‘with’.

A number of nouns for humans have a plural form with *ka-* which is invariant for case (e.g. *ka-huda* ‘women’, cf. *e=huda* ‘woman’). Further, there is a very small group of nouns which have no case marking at all (e.g. *hau* ‘young man’).

Diachronically, *i=* goes back to the PMP locative case marker \*i, while *u=* can be traced back to the PMP genitive case marker \*nu. Default case *e=* cannot be directly linked to a PMP case marker.

## 3. Pronouns and person markers

Enggano has three bound and two unbound pronominal sets (Table 1).

Nominative-I prefixes are shortened forms of the free pronouns. Both go back to the PMP nominative enclitic pronoun set. The nominative-I set of prefixes has been partially remodelled after the nominative-II set (conflation of singular and plural forms). A similar set of nominative-derived person markers is found in Nias Selatan. The emergence of these prefixed person markers derived from inherited enclitic pronouns appears to be a late local innovation, since it is not shared with other Barrier Islands-Batak languages.

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<sup>1</sup> All examples are spelled as in Kähler’s original texts (with minimal adjustments of the diacritics) and thus fail to indicate nasalization of vowels.

**Table 1 – Enggano pronoun and person-marking sets**

	free	genitive	oblique	nom. I	nom. II	pluralizer
1SG	<i>ʔua</i>	- <i>ʔu</i>	<i>iʔiõõʔõũ</i>	<i>ʔu-</i>	<i>ʔu-</i>	
2SG	<i>ʔoʔo</i>	- <i>bu</i>	<i>iʔiõõmũ</i>	<i>ʔo-</i>	<i>u-</i>	
3SG	<i>kia</i>	- <i>dia</i>	<i>iʔiõõnĩã</i>	<i>ka-</i>	<i>i-</i>	
1DU.INCL	<i>ʔika</i>	- <i>ka</i>	<i>iʔiõõkã</i>	<i>ka-</i>	<i>ka-</i>	
1PL.INCL	<i>ʔikaʔa</i>	- <i>kaʔa</i>	<i>iʔiõõkãʔã</i>	<i>ka-</i>	<i>ka-</i>	<i>-aʔa</i>
1PL.EXCL	<i>ʔai</i>	- <i>dai</i>	<i>iʔiõõnãĩ</i>	<i>ʔu-</i>	<i>ʔu-</i>	<i>ʔai</i>
2PL	<i>ʔadiuʔaduu</i>	- <i>du*</i>	<i>iʔiõõnĩũ</i>	<i>ʔo-</i>	<i>u-</i>	<i>-aʔa</i>
3PL	<i>ki</i>	- <i>da</i>	<i>iʔiõõnã</i>	<i>da-/di-/ki-**</i>	<i>da-</i>	

\*2pGEN *-du* must go back to earlier *\*\*-diu* (via *\*\*-duu*), as still can be seen in the oblique *iʔiõõnĩũ*, and from stress placement with *-du* (*eúbadu*), which corresponds to the one found with disyllabic *-dia* and *-dai* (*eúbadia* and *eúbadai*).

\*\*The 3pl nominative-I prefix displays some variation in the texts which is speaker-dependent and may reflect earlier dialect variation. The prefix *da-* (*na-* in nasal environments, e.g. *na-mu-naʔa* ‘(s)he takes’) is consistently used in texts by Daniel, while Heno’ prefers the use of *di-* (with stable *d* even in nasal environments, e.g. *di-mu-naʔa*) and *ki-*.

Nominative-II prefixes are related to the widespread person-marking prefixes in western Indonesian and CEMP languages. These are derived from the PMP genitive pronouns (cf. Zobel 2002).

Genitive pronoun suffixes correspond in function to nouns in genitive case, although genitive pronouns can not be used to express the undergoer with semi-transitive verbs. Oblique pronouns are formed by adding the genitive suffixes to the oblique *iʔioo* with additional nasalization. In the second person plural form, the suffix appears as *-nĩũ* instead of expected *-nũ*.

Free pronouns appear in the same positions as nouns in default case, except when the pronoun is already expressed by a person prefix. In the latter case, free pronouns only occur very rarely. Free pronouns can further be used as possessors, but only when the possessum is a core argument and directly follows the predicate (not counting auxiliary clitics). The free pronouns then appear before the possessum; *ʔua*, *ʔoʔo*, *kia*, *ʔika*, *ki* fuse with the following default case marker *e=* to *ʔue=*, *ʔoʔe=*, *kie=*, *ʔike=*, *kii=*. Example: *ke noʔoni pinakaʔa ʔike=uʔa!* (but now prepare 1DU.INCL:DFT=food) ‘But now, prepare **our food!**’ (Kähler 1975:32, §28). This constituent order POSSESSOR-POSSESSUM widely occurs in the Philippines and eastern Indonesia, but is a unique feature of Enggano among the Barrier Islands-Batak languages and other languages of Sumatra.

## 4. Verb morphology

### 4.1. Basic verb forms

Every verb can appear in three basic forms:

1. The **plain base** is most frequently employed in subjunctive clauses (cf. 5.2) in which case it obligatorily takes a nominative-II prefix. It appears without person prefix in second person imperative clauses.

2. The **bu-form** is used a) in verb-initial independent clauses where it obligatorily takes a nominative-I prefix (cf. 5.1); b) in embedded clauses (e.g. after *pəhai* ‘to be able’); and c) in certain intransitive dependent clauses without person prefix (cf. 5.3). Note that many verb bases (notably causative bases with *pa-*, extended bases with *aba-*, and the auxiliaries *hoo* and *hii*) cannot take the prefix *bu-*, in which case the *bu-form* is indistinguishable from the plain base.
3. The **ki-form** is used in relative clauses and in main clauses with SV-order. It is occasionally used in verb-initial main clauses, obligatorily so with the verb *ia* ‘to be/exist’ (*ki-form*: *kikia*) and the passive prefix *di-* (when not used as noun).

The use of the *bu-form* in embedded clauses and non-agreement dependent clauses is a straightforward continuation of PMP actor voice with \**<um>* (and allomorphs). The construction nom-I + *bu-form* is innovative, but formally has a perfect match in the Nias irrealis construction nom-IRR + *<um>*.

The third form with the prefix *ki-* is innovative, but corresponds to forms in Nias and Mentawai with the cognate prefix *si-*. Note the perfect match e.g. between Enggano *kaN-* (= *ki-* + *aN-*) and Nias *saN-* (= *si-* + *aN-*); Mentawai has the same arrangement of morphemes, but – unlike Enggano and Nias – has retained the \**p* in *paN-* (cf. 4.2): *si-* + *paN-* > *sipaN-*.

#### 4.2. Derived verb bases

Derived bases are formed by means of prefixes, e.g. causative *pa-* or semi-transitive *aN-*, or the applicative suffixes *-i* and *-aʔa*.

Causative *pa-* and applicative *-i* can be directly related to the PMP affixes \**pa-* (causative) and \**-i* (dependent locative undergoer voice). The shift of the latter to applicative function disconnected from voice is shared with many languages of western Indonesia, including all Barrier Islands-Batak languages. As noted above, causative *pa-* cannot combine with *bu-*; this constraint is inherited from PMP (and even from PAN) and is also observed in Toba Batak.

Semi-transitive *aN-* is an irregular reflex of the PMP base-forming prefix \**paN-*. Irregular loss of \**p* is shared with Nias. The *bu-form* of *aN-* is *baN-*, which directly corresponds to PMP \**maN-*.

The suffix *-aʔa* is related to applicative suffixes of similar shapes in western Indonesian and CEMP languages.

### 5. Person-marking and agreement in VS(O) clauses

#### 5.1. Basic clause type

In the basic clause type, the verb takes the prefix *bu-* (or its allomorphs) and a nominative-I prefix:

*keʔanaha da-bu-pukai=ha e=kidai u=koyo eʔana*  
 then 3p.NOM<sub>I</sub>-*bu*-open=EMPH DFT=intestines GEN=pig DEM  
 ‘Then they opened the belly of the pig.’ (Kähler 1975:110, §23)

If S/A is expressed by a full NP, the verb agrees for person, but not for number. Thus, 3s *ka-* is used both with singular and plural S/A-arguments.

*ka-bu-dohoi=ha [e=kaka moʔo kikia i=dopo]<sub>s</sub> [e=idʔi-dia]<sub>o</sub>*  
 3p.NOM<sub>I</sub>-*bu*-hear=EMPH DFT=people REL exist LOC=land DFT=voice-3s.GEN  
 ‘The people who were on the ground heard his voice.’ (Kähler 1975:64, §35)

## 5.2. Subjunctive clauses

Subjunctive clauses include negative clauses, hortative clauses, and dependent clauses in serialized constructions.

In these clause types, the plain verb base is used and takes a nominative<sub>II</sub> prefix to express S/A.

*keaba'a y-a'a'ara* [e=*huda e'ana*]<sub>s</sub>  
NEG 3s.NOM<sub>II</sub>-have.child DFT=woman DET  
'The woman didn't have a child.' (Kähler 1975:110, §23)

*ka-heku-a'a ite'e*  
1pi.NOM<sub>II</sub>-sit-PL here  
'Let's sit down here!' (Kähler 1975:32, §31)

*'o-b-ait'ix'i ka=?ano-ka d-ai i=uba n-ama-noo*  
2s.NOM<sub>I</sub>-bu-call PL-friend-1pi.GEN 3p.NOM<sub>II</sub>-come LOC=house 3p.NOM<sub>II</sub>-aba-eat  
'Call our friends to come to the house and eat!' (Kähler 1975:26, §7)

As in the basic clause type, the verb agrees with a full NP S/A argument for person, but not number.

*kaupe i-paka'aua'a* [ka=*po'inamo*]<sub>s</sub> [e=*puaha u=kaka e'ana*]<sub>o</sub>  
not.yet 3s.NOM<sub>II</sub>-know PL-maiden DFT=look GEN=person DEM  
'The maidens didn't know yet how the appearance of the person.' (Kähler 1940:103, ex.33)

In serialized constructions, lack of number agreement is restricted to the main verb; in any following dependent verb, the number of the subject marker agrees with its antecedent.

*ka-bu-puaka* [ka=*mani*]<sub>s</sub> *d-ahae i-'ue*  
3s.NOM<sub>II</sub>-depart PL-male 3p.NOM<sub>II</sub>-go LOC-sea  
'The men went to the sea'

## 5.3. Ergative alignment in dependent clauses with *a=* and *be*

Following the conjunctions *be* 'because' and *a=* 'when, if' (and other complex conjunctions based on *a=*), verb-initial dependent clauses are ergatively aligned.

With transitive verbs, the A-argument is expressed by a nominative-II prefix. Again, full NPs are cross-referenced with a 3s prefix.

*ida'aua a=iy-a'ekoi* [e=*dohoa e'ana*]<sub>s</sub> [e=*ahau u=puruhui-dia*  
so.that CNJ=3s.NOM<sub>II</sub>-follow CR=boat DET CR=speed GEN=pennant-3s.GEN  
*e'ana*]<sub>o</sub>  
DET  
'so that the boat follows the lightness of its pennant' (Kähler 1975:49, §7)

Intransitive verbs appear in the *bu*-form, but unlike in the basic clause type, the *bu*-form does not take a person-marking prefix. If the subject is a pronoun, it is represented by a free pronoun.

*a=b-ai* [ka=*?ano-ka*]<sub>s</sub>  
CNJ=*bu*-come PL-friend-3p.GEN  
'when our friends come' (Kähler 1975:32, §28)

*a=bu-<sup>?</sup>uehe* [*kia*]<sub>s</sub>  
 CNJ=*bu*-sleep 3s  
 ‘when he sleeps’ (Kähler 1975:63, §31)

This distribution of *bu*-marked intransitive verbs vs. person-marked transitive verbs formally corresponds to the morphological marking of AV and UV verbs in many western Indonesian languages (including all other Barrier Islands-Batak languages), and represents the common western Indonesian basic clause type. The restriction of its occurrence to a special type of dependent clauses in Enggano is an innovation not shared with other MP languages.

The alignment split between nominative alignment in main clauses and ergative alignment in dependent clauses is typologically unusual. In most split-ergative languages (incl. split-ergative Malayo-Polynesian languages like Mori Bawah or Chamorro), the opposite is observed.

## 6. The syntax of antipassive *aN*-, passive *di*- and SV-order *ki*-

### 6.1. The antipassive prefix *aN*-

With the prefixes *bu*-, *ki*- and *aba*-, it forms the portmanteus *baN*-, *kaN*- and *abaN*-, e.g. *dabahoro* (*da*- + *bu*- + *aN*- + *oro* ‘pull’), *kade<sup>?</sup>o* (*ki*- + *aN*- + *ke<sup>?</sup>o* ‘bury’), *yabadada<sup>?</sup>aha* (*i*- + *aba*- + *aN*- + *kada<sup>?</sup>a* ‘inform about’ + *=ha*)

Antipassive verbs are formally semi-transitive. The undergoer is usually expressed in genitive case, and occasionally in as an oblique phrase headed by *i<sup>?</sup>oo*.

#### transitive

*da-k<ub>ode=ha* *e=mehe-na*  
 3p.NOM-*bu*-carry\_on\_shoulder=EMPH DFT=food-3s.GEN  
 ‘They carried their food on their shoulders.’ (Kähler 1975:49, §6)

#### antipassive

*da-b-aN-dode=ha* *u=dohoao*  
 3p.NOM-*bu*-ANTI-carry\_on\_shoulder=EMPH GEN=boat  
 ‘They carried the boats on their shoulders.’ (Kähler 1975:49, §9)

This different marking of undergoers depending on the presence of *aN*- is also found in Nias.

### 6.2. The passive prefix *di*-

The passive is used in two constructions: agentless passive and object nominalization. As an agentless passive, it is always preceded by the prefix *ki*- (see 6.3), both in main clauses and relative clauses:

*ki-di-pəa* *kia i=ahəə-dia* *b-a-pəa kabuku e<sup>?</sup>ana*  
*ki*-PASS-see 3s LOC=way-3s.GEN *bu*-?-see widow DEM  
 ‘He was seen on his way to visit the widow.’ (Kähler 1975:124, §10)

*ka-b-ia* *e=kaka* *hemo<sup>?</sup>o ki-di-pudu*  
 3s.NOM-*bu*-exist DFT=person REL *ki*-PASS-kill  
 ‘There was a person who was killed.’ (Kähler 1975:60, §23)

Note that with agentless passives, the actor cannot be expressed by an overt NP.

Object nominalizations with *di*- are nouns that represent the undergoer of the verb; the actor is expressed in genitive case, e.g. *e=di-<sup>?</sup>ua-dia* (DFT=PASS-say-3s.GEN) ‘what has been said by

him/her'. They are commonly used with a head noun (occasionally also without head) in object relative clauses:

*kaʔano u=mani moʔo e=ni-pii-nia neʔeni*  
 PL-friend GEN=man REL DFT=PASS-reject-3s.GEN earlier  
 'the friends of the man which she had rejected' (Kähler 1975:18, §15)

For full noun actors, this is the only way to express object relative clauses. With pronoun actors, there is an alternative construction using the prefix *ki-* (see next section).

## 6.2. The SV-prefix *ki-*

The prefix *ki-* marks all verbs in clauses with SV-order, and also in subject relative clauses:

*keʔanaha kia k-aiʔioʔoi=daʔa e=itʔi eʔana*  
 then 3s *ki*-follow=EMPH DFT=word DEM  
 'So she obeyed these words' (Kähler 1975:109, §7)

*e=niə u=kaka moʔo ki-ʔokoʔoi e=kuo eʔana*  
 DFT=name GEN=person REL *ki*-carve DFT=wood DEM  
 'the name of the person who carved this wood' (Kähler 1975:56, §10)

The use of *ki-* in subject relative clauses agrees with the use of *si-* in Nias and Mentawai (note that PMP \*s becomes *k* in Enggano). \*si appears as a free relative clause marker in all other Barrier Islands-Batak languages (Simalur, Gayo, Karo Batak; also with a more limited scope in Toba Batak), but its use as a prefix directly affixed to the verb is an innovation. Unique to Enggano, Nias and Mentawai is further the use of the M-less variant of actor voice (or actor voice-derived) verb prefixes, e.g. Enggano *kaN-*, Nias *saN-*, Mentawai *sipaN-* (cf. Simalur *si maN-*).

The use of *ki-* in main clauses with SV order is an innovation in Enggano. Similar clauses occur in Nias, but function as cleft clauses with contrastive focus on the subject.

As mentioned in 5.1., *ki*-verbs are also used in object relative clauses with pronoun actors:

*e=kaka kidera moʔo ki k-aitʔixʔi neʔeni*  
 DFT=person all REL 3p *ki*-call earlier  
 'all people whom they had called earlier' (Kähler 1975:29, §17)

Note that the word order in the relative clause is SV, and thus conforms with the use of the *ki-* form in other contexts. No other Barrier Islands-Batak language allows SV-order in object relative clauses. Only Mentawai agrees with Enggano in using \*si-VERB in object relative clauses; however, unlike in Enggano, a pronoun agent is expressed by a genitive suffix, e.g. *iba si-ala-ra* (fish REL-get-3p.GEN) 'the fish which they had obtained'.

## References

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