

A New Perspective on the Western Austronesian Alignment Debate

Charlotte Hemmings
University of Oxford
charlotte.hemmings@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk

1. Introduction

- ❖ Western Austronesian languages are known to have SYMMETRICAL VOICE or alternations in the mapping of arguments to functions *without* changes in syntactic transitivity (Riesberg 2014, Himmelmann 2005).
- ❖ This has led to a debate as to whether the languages are ACCUSATIVE, ERGATIVE or have a DIFFERENT SYSTEM OF ALIGNMENT altogether.
- ❖ In this talk, I will present evidence to show that Western Austronesian languages can be syntactically symmetrical and nonetheless differ in the semantic and/or discourse properties associated with the voices.
- ❖ This makes some languages appear more “ergative” and others appear more “accusative” despite very similar syntactic properties.
- ❖ Consequently, I will argue that symmetrical voice and ergative/accusative alignment are not necessarily mutually exclusive.
- ❖ Instead, identifying alignment in languages with more than one (syntactically) transitive clause-type involves identifying the most proto-typical transitive clause using morphosyntactic, semantic and discourse means. (Kroeger 1993, 2004).
- ❖ Applying such tests to different WAn voice systems allows us to plot voice systems on a scale from more proto-typically ERGATIVE to more proto-typically ACCUSATIVE, via different degrees of symmetry at different levels of structure.
- ❖ Hence, we can capture both the morphosyntactically symmetrical nature of the alternations, and also the differences between Philippine-type, Indonesian-type and other WAn languages.

- ❖ **Roadmap:**
 - Symmetrical Voice Systems
 - The Alignment Debate
 - Semantic and Discourse Differences between WAn Voice Systems
 - A Scalar Model of Alignment
 - Conclusions

2. Symmetrical Voice Systems

- ❖ SYMMETRICAL VOICE alternations are alternations in verbal morphology that indicate different mappings of arguments to functions but (seemingly) do not affect SYNTACTIC TRANSITIVITY. In other words, languages have multiple transitive clause types.
- ❖ This can be illustrated from Kelabit using the root *laak* ‘cook’:

(1) *Kelabit*¹

a. **Actor Voice**

Nengelaak nuba' tesineh nedih
 PFV.AV.cook rice mother 3SG.POSS
 'Her mother cooked rice'

b. **Undergoer Voice**

Linaak tesineh nedih nuba'
 PFV.UV.cook mother 3SG.POSS rice
 'Her mother cooked rice'

- ❖ In AV and UV alike, both actor and undergoer are expressed as NP arguments, whereas obliques are typically expressed as PPs:

(2) *Kelabit Obliques*

a. **Actor Voice**

La'ih sineh nemerey nuba' [ngen anak nedih]_{PP}
 man DEM PFV.AV.give rice to child 3SG.POSS
 'The man gave rice to his child'

b. **Undergoer Voice**

Birey la'ih sineh nuba' [ngen anak nedih]_{PP}
 PFV.UV.give man DEM rice to child 3SG.POSS
 'The man gave rice to his child'

- ❖ Moreover, there are several SYNTACTIC TESTS that support the identification of actor and undergoer as core arguments in both AV and UV:
 ➤ E.g. only the privileged argument can be relativized on:

(3) *Kelabit Relative Clauses*

a. **Actor Voice**

Seni'er kuh la'ih [suk nenekul nuba' ngen seduk]
 UV.PFV.see 1SG man REL PFV.AV.spoon rice with spoon
 'I saw the man who spooned up rice with a spoon'

b. *Seni'er kuh nuba' [suk nekul la'ih sineh]

UV.PFV.see 1SG rice REL AV.spoon man DEM
 For: 'I saw the spoon that the man used to spoon up his rice'

¹ Nb. word order is variable in Kelabit and the subject (or actor in AV and undergoer in UV) can appear both pre-verbally and clause-finally.

c. **Undergoer Voice**

Seni'er kuh nuba' [suk sikul la'ih sineh ngen seduk]
 UV.PFV.see 1SG rice REL UV.PFV.spoon man DEM with spoon
 'I saw the rice that the man spooned up with a spoon'

d. *Seni'er kuh la'ih [suk sikul nuba']

UV.PFV.see 1SG man REL UV.PFV.spoon rice
 For: 'I saw the man who spooned up rice'

- Only the privileged argument can be "raised" from an embedded clause in raising constructions:

(4) *Kelabit Raising Constructions*

a. **Actor Voice**

Uih ngelinuh ieh tu'uh-tu'uh [nekuman nuba' ngimalem]
 1SG AV.think 3SG real-REDUP AV.PFV.eat rice yesterday
 'I thought him truly to have eaten his rice yesterday'

b. *Uih ngelinuh nuba' tu'uh-tu'uh [nekuman ieh ngimalem]

1SG AV.PFV.think rice real-REDUP AV.PFV.eat 3SG yesterday
 FOR: 'I thought the rice truly to have been eaten by him yesterday'

c. **Undergoer Voice**

Uih ngelinuh nuba' tu'uh-tu'uh [kinan neh ngimalem]
 1SG AV.PFV.think rice real-REDUP UV.PFV.eat 3SG yesterday
 'I thought the rice truly to have been eaten by him yesterday'

d. *Uih ngelinuh ieh tu'uh-tu'uh [kinan nuba' ngimalem]

1SG AV.think 3SG real-REDUP UV.PFV.eat rice yesterday
 FOR: 'I thought him truly to have eaten his rice yesterday'

- The verb and non-privileged actor or undergoer cannot be separated with time adverbials like *ngimalem*:

(5) *Kelabit Object Position and Adverb Placement*

a. **Actor Voice**

La'ih sineh [nekuman bua' kaber] ngimalem
 man DEM PFV.UV.eat fruit pineapple yesterday
 'The man ate pineapple yesterday'

b. *La'ih sineh nekuman **ngimalem** bua' kaber
 man DEM PFV.AV.eat yesterday fruit pineapple
 For: 'The man ate pineapple yesterday'

c. **Undergoer Voice**

[Kinan la'ih sineh] **ngimalem** bua' kaber sineh
 PFV.UV.eat man DEM yesterday fruit pineapple DEM
 'The man ate that pineapple yesterday'

d. *Kinan **ngimalem** la'ih sineh bua' kaber sineh
 PFV.UV.eat yesterday man DEM fruit pineapple DEM
 For: 'The man ate that pineapple yesterday'

- Obliques can be fronted before pre-verbal privileged arguments, whereas non-privileged arguments cannot:

(6) *Kelabit Adjunct Fronting*

a. **Fronted AV Oblique**

Ngen tekul, la'ih sineh nenekul nuba'
 with spoon man DEM AV.PFV.spoon rice
 'With a spoon, the man spooned up rice'

b. **Fronted AV Undergoer**

*nuba', la'ih sineh nenekul ngen tekul
 rice man DEM AV.PFV.spoon with spoon
 FOR: 'Rice, the man spooned up with a spoon'

c. **Fronted UV Oblique**

Ngen tekul, nuba' sikul la'ih sineh
 with spoon rice UV.PFV.spoon man DEM
 'With a spoon, the rice was spooned up by the man'

d. **Fronted UV Actor**

*la'ih sineh, nuba' sikul ngen tekul
 man DEM rice UV.PFV.spoon with spoon
 FOR: 'the man, rice was spooned up by him'

- ❖ Hence, both AV and UV can be analysed as MORPHOSYNTACTICALLY TRANSITIVE.
- ❖ Kelabit is not a special case in this respect. Similar patterns are found in other Western Austronesian languages, e.g. Tagalog (Kroeger 1993, Riesberg 2014), Balinese (Riesberg 2014, Arka 2003) and Indonesian (Riesberg 2014, Musgrave 2002), as well as in other languages of Northern Sarawak, e.g. Sa'ban (see appendix).

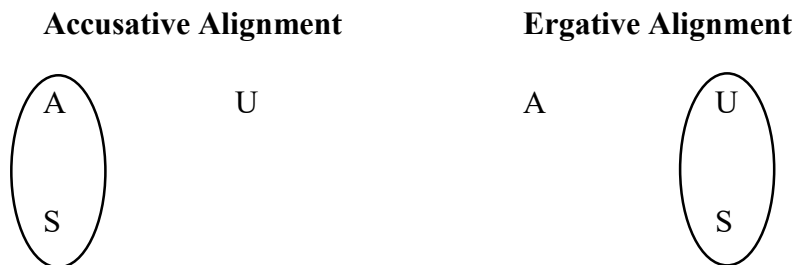
Table 1. Core Properties of Privileged and Non-privileged Arguments in Western Austronesian

Language	AV actor & UV undergoer	AV undergoer and UV actor
Kelabit	Relativisation Raising	Post-verbal position Adjunct fronting
Sa'ban	Relativisation	Post-verbal position Adjunct fronting
Tagalog (Kroeger 1993, Schachter 1976)	Relativisation Quantifier Float	Adjunct fronting Participial <i>nang</i> clauses
Indonesian (Riesberg 2014, Musgrave 2002)	Relativisation Raising	Quantifier float
Balinese (Riesberg 2014, Arka 2003)	Relativisation	Quantifier float

- ❖ Consequently, there is good evidence to suggest that BOTH AV AND UV ARE TRANSITIVE in a wide-range of Western Austronesian languages, that otherwise differ in their typological properties (Arka and Ross 2005).
- ❖ Let us now explore the implications for alignment typology...

3. The Alignment Debate

- ❖ Typically, alignment is assessed by comparing the core arguments of transitive and intransitive clauses:



- ❖ However, if there are multiple transitive clause types, then the question arises of which transitive clause to compare:

(7) *Kelabit Intransitive Clause*

a. **Intransitive Clause**

[Uku'] tudo lem bakul nedih
 dog sit in basket 3SG.POSS
 S
 'The dog is sitting in its basket'

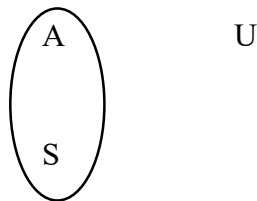
b. **Actor Voice**

[La'ih sineh] nekuman bua' kaber
 man DEM AV.PFV.eat pineapple
 A U
 'The man eats pineapple'

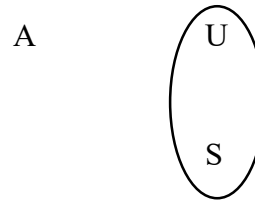
c. **Undergoer Voice**

[bua' kaber] kinan la'ih sineh
 pineapple UV.PFV.eat man DEM
 U A
 'The man eats pineapple'

Actor Voice = Accusative



Undergoer Voice = Ergative



❖ Three different approaches to Western Austronesian alignment have been taken in the literature:

1. Alignment is accusative – AV is basic, UV is a passive (Bloomfield 1917)
2. Alignment is ergative – UV is basic, AV is an antipassive (Aldridge 2012, Starosta 1998)
3. Alignment is neither accusative nor ergative but symmetrical (Foley 2008, Kroeger 1993, Riesberg 2014)

❖ The morphosyntactic patterns shown in (3)-(6) and Table 1 suggest that UV is different from a passive and AV is different from an antipassive since both are transitive with two core arguments.

❖ This would seem to rule out both the accusative and ergative accounts, at least in the canonical understanding.

- ❖ However, assuming ‘symmetrical’ as an alignment type disassociates WAn from other voice systems and implies that all WAn voice systems are alike.
- ❖ So what can we do to decide between the options?
- ❖ Identifying alignment involves identifying the most basic transitive clause and transitivity can not only be defined in morphosyntactic terms but also in SEMANTIC and DISCOURSE terms (Givón 1994, 2017, Hopper and Thompson 1980)
- ❖ If we look at the semantics and discourse properties of Western Austronesian voices, then there are differences (both between AV and UV, and between languages) that might lead us to posit differences in alignment.

4. Semantic and Discourse Variation

- ❖ In canonical active/passive and ergative/antipassive alternations, there are not only differences in syntactic transitivity, but also semantic and discourse differences between the voices.
- ❖ In terms of semantics, active and ergative clauses have properties of high transitivity, e.g. telic, punctual action, totally affected/highly individuated undergoers:
- ❖ In contrast, antipassives are associated with low transitivity parameters such as imperfective aspect, indefinite/non-individuated undergoers and non-affected undergoers (see Polinsky to appear, Cooreman 1994, Dixon 1994, Spreng 2010).
- ❖ Similarly, passives are associated with low transitivity parameters, such as reduced agency on the part of the actor and resultative/stative interpretations (Shibatani 1985):

Table 2: Transitivity Parameters (Hopper and Thompson 1980)

	High	Low
a. No. of Arguments	two or more participants	one participant
b. Kinesis	action	state
c. Aspect	telic	atelic
d. Punctuality	punctual	non-punctual
e. Volitionality	volitional	non-volitional
f. Affirmation	affirmative	negative
g. Mode	realis	irrealis
h. Agency	A high in agency	A low in agency
i. Affectedness of U	U totally affected	U not affected
j. Individuation of U	U highly individuated	U non-individuated

- ❖ A major motivation for the ergative analysis in “Philippine-type” languages is that UV has semantic properties associated with high transitivity, whilst AV has properties associated with low transitivity.
- ❖ Firstly, in languages like Tagalog the AV undergoer is typically interpreted as indefinite (see also Aldridge (2012) for corpus figures):

12th Conference of the Association for Linguistic Typology (ALT)
 Australian National University (ANU), Canberra
 12th-14th December 2017

(8) *Tagalog*

a. **Actor Voice**

Nagluto **ang babae** *ng/*sa manok.*
 AV.PFV.cook SUBJ woman a/*the chicken
 ‘The woman cooked a/*the chicken.’

b. **Undergoer Voice**

Niluto *ng babae* **ang manok.**
 UV.PFV.cook CORE woman SUBJ chicken
 ‘The woman cooked the chicken.’ (Katagiri 2005: 167)

- ❖ Secondly, the AV undergoer is typically interpreted as less-affected and AV is sometimes ungrammatical in contexts where the undergoer is inherently affected

(9) *Tagalog*

a. **Actor Voice**

*Pumatay **si Juan** *ng aso*
 AV.PFV.kill SUBJ Juan CORE dog
 For: ‘Juan killed a dog’

b. **Undergoer Voice**

Pinatay *ni Juan* **ang aso**
 UV.PFV.kill CORE Juan SUBJ dog
 ‘Juan killed the/a dog’ (Katagiri 2005: 169)

(10) *Tagalog*

a. **Actor Voice**

S<um>untok **si Pedro** kay Jose
 <AV>hit SUBJ Pedro OBL Jose
 ‘Pedro hit Jose (without much damage/hit at him).’

b. **Undergoer Voice**

S<in>untok *ni Pedro* **si Jose**
 <UV>hit CORE Pedro SUBJ Jose
 ‘Pedro hit Jose.’ (Saclot 2006: 10, cited in Latrouite 2011: 187)

- ❖ Finally, AV in Tagalog is typically associated with atelic activities, whilst UV clauses are interpreted as telic accomplishments:

(11) *Tagalog*

a. **Actor Voice**

nang	mainit	na	ang mantika,	nagprito	siya
when	hot	already	SUBJ cooking oil	PFV.AV.fry	3SG.NOM

ng kamote

CORE camote

‘When the oil was already hot, she fried camote.’ (focus on activity of frying)

b. **Undergoer Voice**

nang	mainit	na	ang mantika,	ip<in>rito	<i>niya</i>
when	hot	already	SUBJ cooking oil	<UV.PFV>fry	3SG.GEN

ang kamote

SUBJ camote

‘When the oil was already hot, she fried the camote.’ (focus on result of frying)

(Nolasco 2005: 225)

- ❖ Hence, semantically AV has many of the functional properties of an antipassive and UV appears basic.
- ❖ This contrasts with Indonesian-type languages, where both AV and UV undergoers can be highly definite and individuated (see Pastika and Quick (2007) on Hopper & Thompson transitivity parameters in Balinese):

(12) *Balinese*

a. **Actor Voice**

Tiang	nyepak	cicing-e.
1SG	AV.kick	dog-DEF

‘I kicked the dog.’

b. **Undergoer Voice**

Cicing-e	sepak	tiang.
dog-DEF	UV.kick	1SG

‘The dog was kicked by me.’ (Artawa 1998: 8)

- ❖ Similarly, in Kelabit, although AV is often used in context with indefinite or generic undergoers, it is also possible to have highly individuated/affected undergoer, as in (13d):

(13) *Kelabit AV Undergoers*

a. **No Undergoer**

Neh **nieh** kuman medto
 DEM PT=3SG.NOM AV.eat midday
 ‘So she ate lunch’

b. **Non-specific Undergoer**

Mo, mey **kiteh** ngenep *telu’a*
 yes go 1DU.INCL AV.catch crow
 ‘Yes, let’s go and catch crows’

c. **Indefinite Undergoer**

Doo’ **tuih** naru’ *edteh ebpung.*
 good PT=1SG.1 AV.do one trap
 ‘I’d better make a trap.’

d. **Definite Undergoer**

neh **nieh** muwer *ieh*
 DEM PT=3SG.NOM AV.butcher 3SG.NOM
 ‘Then she butchered it [the yellow-throated marten]’

- ❖ The choice of AV or UV is thought to make an aspectual difference in a wide range of languages, with UV more likely to express telic events, and AV more likely to express atelic events:

(14) *Kelabit*

a. **Actor Voice**

neh **nieh** nipa~nipa lem takub
 then PT=3SG.NOM REDUP~AV.pack in pocket
 ‘Then he puts [pears] into a pocket (action ongoing).’

b. **Undergoer Voice**

Senipa *neh* **neh bua’ nuk ineh.**
 UV.PFV.pack 3SG.GEN PT fruit REL DEM
 ‘And put that fruit away (action completed).’

- ❖ A similar contrast is described for Spoken Jakarta Indonesian, where UV correlates with realis/punctual action and AV with irrealis/durative uses (Wouk 1996)
- ❖ Conclusion: WAN languages differ, particularly in the semantic properties associated with AV.
- ❖ In terms of discourse, transitive clauses also have particular characteristics. Firstly, they tend to be the most frequent means of expressing two-participant events, whilst marked

constructions like the passive and antipassive are less frequent (Comrie 1988, Kroeger 2004, Givón 2017, Cooreman 1987).

- ❖ Secondly, the different clause types are associated with alternations in the relative discourse topicality of actor and undergoer:

Table 3. Topicality of Arguments (Cooreman 1987)

	Topicality of Arguments		
	Actor	>	Undergoer
Active/Ergative	Actor	>	Undergoer
Inverse	Undergoer	>	Actor
Passive	Undergoer	>>	Actor
Antipassive	Actor	>>	Undergoer

- ❖ Givón (1994, 2017) proposes two quantitative measures to analyse the relative discourse topicality of actor and undergoer in transitive clauses: referential distance (RD) and topical persistence (TP)
- ❖ Again, WAn languages appear to differ in the discourse characteristics of the voices.
- ❖ Looking at frequency and topicality in Tagalog, Cooreman, Fox, and Givón (1984) show that UV is more frequent and has the discourse patterns of an active clause, whilst AV has the discourse the patterns of an antipassive.
- ❖ Looking at frequency and topicality in Indonesian, Cumming (1995) showed that AV is more frequent than UV (see Pastika (1999) on Balinese, Davies (2005) on Madurese) Moreover, AV is often used when both actor and undergoer are topical, but UV can be used when the undergoer is more topical than the actor, like an inverse or passive (Wouk 1996).
- ❖ What's particularly interesting, is that even in very closely-related languages – such as Kelabit and Sa'ban – there can be discourse differences in RD and topical TP

Table 5. Referential Distance in Northern Sarawak Folktales

		Actor Voice (AV)			Undergoer Voice (UV)		
		1-3 (High)	>3 (Low)	Total	1-3 (High)	>3 (Low)	Total
Kelabit	A	71 (89%)	9 (11%)	80	49 (92%)	4 (8%)	53
	U	51 (64%)	29 (36%)	80	36 (68%)	17 (32%)	53
Sa'ban	A	45 (94%)	2 (6%)	48	58 (95%)	3 (5%)	61
	U	24 (50%)	24 (50%)	48	49 (80%)	12 (20%)	61

Table 6. *Topical Persistence in Northern Sarawak Folktales*

		Actor Voice (AV)			Undergoer Voice (UV)		
		>2 (High)	0-2 (Low)	Total	>2 (High)	0-2 (Low)	Total
Kelabit	A	59 (74%)	21 (26%)	80	41 (77%)	12 (23%)	53
	U	43 (54%)	37 (46%)	80	23 (43%)	30 (57%)	53
Sa'ban	A	32 (67%)	16 (33%)	48	52 (85%)	9 (15%)	61
	U	16 (33%)	32 (67%)	48	32 (52%)	29 (48%)	61

- ❖ These patterns would suggest that in DISCOURSE and SEMANTIC terms, languages like Tagalog do indeed have much in common with ERGATIVE languages; languages like Indonesian look much more ACCUSATIVE; and languages like those of Northern Sarawak appear to fall somewhere in-between.

5. A Scalar Model of Alignment

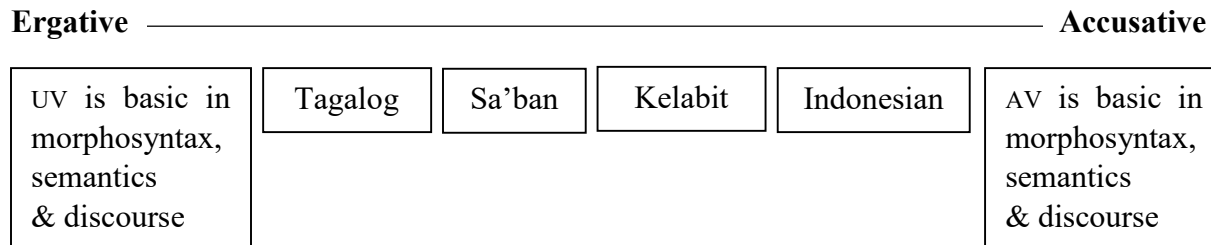


Figure 1. *The WAn Alignment Scale*

5. Conclusion

- ❖ SYMMETRICAL VOICE languages pose a challenge to canonical models of (morphosyntactic) alignment since they have multiple transitive clauses.
- ❖ This has led to a debate as to whether they have ERGATIVE alignment, ACCUSATIVE alignment or a DIFFERENT SYSTEM of alignment altogether.
- ❖ I presented a number of morphosyntactic tests that support the identification of both AV and UV as transitive in a range of WAn languages – and hence argue against a canonical ergative or accusative account.
- ❖ However, I have also shown that there are a number of semantic and discourse differences between AV and UV in the different languages, which suggests that simply classifying all symmetrical voice languages as having SYMMETRICAL or PHILIPPINE-TYPE alignment may miss further important distinctions between them.
- ❖ Consequently, I proposed that we instead widen our understanding of alignment to include not only morphosyntactic, but also the semantic and discourse properties of the different voices, to see if there is any evidence for treating either UV or AV as more basic.

- ❖ This allows us to position WAn languages on a scale from ergative to accusative and has the benefit that it allows us to capture both the similarities and the differences between WAn voice systems and other alternations cross-linguistically.

6. References

- Aldridge, Edith. 2012. "Antipassive and ergativity in Tagalog." *Lingua* 122 (3):192-203. doi: 10.1016/j.lingua.2011.10.012.
- Arka, I. Wayan. 2003. "Balinese morphosyntax : a lexical-functional approach." "Revised version of the author's PhD dissertation, Department of Linguistics, University of Sydney.
- Arka, I. Wayan, and Malcolm Ross. 2005. *The many faces of Austronesian voice systems : some new empirical studies*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.
- Artawa, I Ketut. 1998. *Ergativity and Balinese syntax (Parts 1, 2 and 3)*. Jakarta: NUSA.
- Bloomfield, Leonard. 1917. *Tagalog Texts with Grammatical Analysis: List of formations and glossary*. Vol. 3: University of Illinois.
- Comrie, Bernard. 1988. "Passive and voice." *Passive and voice* 1 (3):9-23.
- Cooreman, A., B. Fox, and T. Givón. 1984. "The Discourse Definition of Ergativity." *Studies in Language: International Journal Sponsored by the Foundation 'Foundations of Language'* 8 (1):1-34.
- Cooreman, Ann. 1987. *Transitivity and discourse continuity in Chamorro narratives*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Cooreman, Ann. 1994. "A functional typology of antipassives." In *Voice: Form and function*, edited by B. Fox and P. Hopper, 49-88. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Cumming, Susanna. 1995. "Multifunctionality and the realization problem in modelling discourse production." *Discourse, Grammar and Typology: Papers in Honor of John Verhaar*:247-273.
- Davies, William D. 2005. "The richness of Madurese voice." *Aspects of voice and marking in Austronesian languages*:197-220.
- Dixon, Robert M. W. 1994. *Ergativity, Cambridge studies in linguistics*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Foley, William A. 2008. "The place of Philippine languages in a typology of voice systems." In *Voice and grammatical relations in Austronesian languages*, edited by Peter K. Austin and Simon Musgrave, 22-44. Stanford: CSLI Publications.
- Givón, Talmy. 1994. *Voice and inversion*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Givón, Talmy. 2017. *The Story of Zero*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Himmelman, Nikolaus P. 2005. "The Austronesian Languages of Asia and Madagascar: Typological Characteristics." In *The Austronesian Languages of Asia and Madagascar*, edited by Alexander Adelaar and Nikolaus P. Himmelman, 110-181. London: Routledge.
- Hopper, Paul J, and Sandra A Thompson. 1980. "Transitivity in grammar and discourse." *Language* 56:251-299.
- Katagiri, Masumi. 2005. "Voice, ergativity and transitivity in Tagalog and other Philippine languages: a typological perspective." In *The many faces of Austronesian voice systems: some new empirical studies*, edited by I Wayan Arka and Malcolm Ross, 153-174. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.

- Kroeger, Paul R. 1993. *Phrase Structure and Grammatical Relations in Tagalog*. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.
- Kroeger, Paul R. 2004. *Analyzing syntax: a lexical-functional approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Latrouite, Anja. 2011. "Voice and case in Tagalog: the coding of prominence and orientation." Phd Dissertation, University of Düsseldorf.
- Musgrave, Simon. 2002. "Non-subject arguments in Indonesian." PhD Dissertation, Melbourne University.
- Nolasco, Ricardo Ma. 2005. "What Philippine Ergativity really means." Taiwan-Japan Joint Workshop on Austronesian Languages, National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan, June 23-24.
- Pastika, I Wayan. 1999. "Voice selection in Balinese narrative discourse." Australian National University.
- Pastika, I Wayan, and Phil Quick. 2007. "Comparing Transitive Constructions in Balinese and Pendau." *SEALS XIII*:179.
- Polinsky, Maria. to appear. "Antipassive." In *The Oxford Handbook of Ergativity*, edited by J. Coon, D. Massam and L. Travis. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Riesberg, Sonja. 2014. *Symmetrical voice and linking in western Austronesian languages, Pacific Linguistics*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Saclot, Maureen Joy. 2006. "On the transitivity of the actor focus and patient focus constructions in Tagalog." Tenth International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics, Palawan, Philippines.
- Schachter, Paul. 1976. "The Subject in Philippine Languages: Topic, Actor, Actor-Topic, or None of the Above?" In *Subject and Topic*, edited by Charles N. Li, 491-518. Academic.
- Spreng, Bettina. 2010. "On the conditions for antipassives." *Language and Linguistics Compass* 4 (7):556-575.
- Starosta, Stanley. 1998. "Ergativity, transitivity, and clitic coreference in four Western Austronesian languages." In *Case, typology and grammar*, edited by Anna Siewierska and J. J. Song, 277-307. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Wechsler, Stephen, and I Wayan Arka. 1998. "Syntactic ergativity in Balinese: an argument structure based theory." *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 16 (2):387-442.
- Wouk, Fay. 1996. "Voice in Indonesian discourse and its implications for theories of the development of ergativity." *Studies in Language. International Journal sponsored by the Foundation "Foundations of Language"* 20 (2):361-410.

7. Acknowledgements

With many thanks to the Kelabit and Sa'ban communities for working tirelessly with me to try and document and describe the structure of the languages, as well as the Leverhulme Trust for their generous financial support. Many thanks also to Beatrice Clayre for sharing and explaining her collection of texts in the Sa'ban language.

8. Appendix: Data Supporting the Symmetrical Voice Analysis

(15) *Tagalog Adjunct Fronting*

a. **Fronted UV Oblique**

[Sa tindahan] bi-bilh-in ng lalaki ang isda
 OBL store IRR-buy-UV GEN man NOM fish
 ‘In the store, the man will buy the fish’

b. **Fronted UV Actor**

*[ng lalaki] bi-bilh-in sa tindahan ang isda
 GEN man IRR-buy-UV OBL store NOM fish

c. **Fronted AV Undergoer**

*[Ng isda] b<um>ili sa tindahan ang lalaki
 GEN fish <AV>buy OBL store NOM man
 (Foley 2008: 34)

(16) *Tagalog Participial nang clauses*

a. **AV Undergoer as controller**

Nanghuli ng magnanakaw ang polis [nang
 AV.PFV.catch GEN thief NOM police ADV

pumapasok sa bangko]
 AV.IPFV.enter DAT bank

‘The police caught a/the thief when entering the bank’

Interpretation 1: the police entered the bank

Interpretation 2: the thief entered the bank

b. **AV Oblique as controller**

Bumista si Juan sa hari [nang nagiisa]
 AV.PFV.visit NOM Juan DAT king ADV AV.IPFV.one

‘Juan visited the king alone’

Only possible interpretation: Juan was alone

Ungrammatical: the King was alone (Kroeger 1993: 47)

(17) *Balinese Quantifier Float*

a. **Quantifier launched by AV undergoer**

Ia nakonin tiang ibi ajak makejang
 3 AV.ask 1 yesterday accompanying all

‘They all asked me yesterday’

‘(S)he asked us all yesterday’

b. **Quantifier launched by UV undergoer**

Ia dengokin tiang ibi ajak makejang
 3 UV.vist 1 yesterday accompanying all
 ‘(S)he was visited by us all yesterday’
 ‘They were all visited by me yesterday’ (Wechsler and Arka 1998: 404)

(18) *Sa’ban Time Adverbials*

a. **Actor Voice**

Suel hnah maan bi’ **salam**
 Girl DEM AV.eat rice yesterday
 ‘The woman/girl ate rice yesterday’

b. *Suel hnah maan **salam** bi’
 Girl DEM AV.eat yesterday rice

c. **Undergoer Voice**

Inaan suel hnah bi’ nah **salam**
 UV.eat girl DEM rice DEM yesterday
 ‘That girl ate the rice yesterday’

d. *Inaan **salam** suel hnah bi’ nah
 UV.eat yesterday girl DEM rice DEM
 (from fieldnotes)

(19) *Sa’ban Core vs Oblique Order*

a. **Actor Voice**

Suel hnah mraai bree ngaan anak yeh
 Girl DEM AV.give rice to child 3SG
 ‘The girl gave rice to her child’

b. *#Suel hnah mraai ngaan anak yeh bree
 Girl DEM AV.give to child 3SG rice

c. **Undergoer Voice**

Bree iraa suel hnah ngaan anak yeh
 rice UV.give girl DEM to child 3SG
 ‘the girl gave rice to her child’

d. *bree iraa ngaan anak yeh suel hnah
 rice UV.give to child 3SG girl DEM
 (from fieldnotes)