

Differential Case Marking in Northern Sarawak

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1. Introduction

- ❖ In this talk, I discuss two interesting patterns of **Differential Case Marking** in the languages of Northern Sarawak based on fieldwork between 2013-2019:
 - Differential Actor Marking in (Bario) Kelabit
 - Differential Undergoer Marking in (Ba Kelalan) Lun Bawang
- ❖ Both Kelabit and Lun Bawang have the characteristic Western Austronesian **symmetrical voice** system in which the mapping of arguments to functions alternate without changes in the syntactic transitivity (Riesberg 2014).
- ❖ However, unlike the more conservative Western Austronesian languages, the function of arguments is indicated via word order rather than case-marking.
- ❖ Case-marking is only preserved in the pronominal system – and here we find that the same argument can be expressed by more than one case form depending on context.
- ❖ The main aims are:
 - a. To illustrate the **differential case systems** in Bario Kelabit and Ba' Kelalan Lun Bawang, exploring the role of information structure in determining the choice of case form.
 - b. To consider the **implications** of differential marking for the relationship between morphological encoding, grammatical function and information structure.
- ❖ The route map is as follows:
 - Differential marking cross-linguistically
 - Symmetrical Voice & Grammatical Functions in Western Austronesian
 - Differential Actor Marking in Kelabit
 - Differential Undergoer Marking in Lun Bawang
 - Implications & Conclusions

2. Differential Marking Cross-linguistically

- ❖ **Differential marking** is the non-uniform marking of grammatical arguments. It occurs whenever an argument of a predicate with the same semantic role and the same grammatical function can be encoded in more than one way, depending on context.¹
- ❖ Some differentiate between **differential case marking** (flagging) and **differential agreement** indexing) – it is a matter of some debate as to whether they have the same triggers (see Witzlack-Makarevich and Seržant 2018: 3 for discussion).

¹ Importantly – not as the result of voice alternations

- ❖ Some linguists subdivide differential marking into **optional** (presence vs absence) and **alternating** (case 1 vs case 2) systems (Chappell and Verstraete forthcoming):

(1) **Optional Case Marking**

Persian (Indo-Iranian, Iemmolo 2013: 378-9)

- a. Hasan ketab-**râ** did
 Hasan book-**ACC** see:PST.3SG
 ‘Hasan saw the book’
- b. Hasan ketab did
 Hasan book see:PST.3SG
 ‘Hasan saw a book’

(2) **Alternating Case Marking**

Finnish (Uralic, Iemmolo 2013: 379)

- a. hän jo-i maido-**n**
 s/he drink-PST.3SG milk-**ACC**
 ‘S/he drank (all) the milk’
- b. hän jo-i maito-**a**
 s/he drink-PST.3SG milk-**PART**
 ‘S/he drank (some of the) milk’

- ❖ Differential marking was first discussed under the name DIFFERENTIAL OBJECT MARKING – for cases where the object or undergoer receives different marking in different contexts (Bossong 1985, 1991).
- ❖ However, it is now known that other semantic roles and grammatical arguments can also be differentially marked, including the **actor/subject** – variously referred to as DIFFERENTIAL SUBJECT MARKING (De Hoop and De Swart 2008), DIFFERENTIAL AGENT MARKING (Fauconnier 2011) and OPTIONAL ERGATIVITY (Gaby 2010, McGregor 2006, McGregor 2010) – and the **goal/recipient** (Kittilä 2008).
- ❖ We will focus on differential object marking (DOM) and differential actor marking (DAM).
- ❖ Differential marking is known to be affected by SEMANTIC FACTORS – this includes semantic properties related to the argument (e.g. inherent properties like animacy, or non-inherent pragmatic properties like definiteness/referentiality) and semantic properties related to the event (e.g. volitionality, control, affectedness) (Aissen 2003, Bossong 1985, De Swart 2007, Naess 2004, De Hoop and Narasimhan 2008)

(3) *Hindi (Mohanan 1990: 104)*

a. **Animate Undergoer**

Ilaa-ne bacce-ko uTaayaa
 Ila-ERG child-ACC lift.PFV
 ‘Ila lifted a/the child’

b. **Inanimate Undergoer**
 Ilaa-ne haar uTaayaa
 Ila-ERG necklace lift.PFV
 ‘Ila lifted a necklace’

c. **Definite Undergoer**
 Ilaa-ne haar-ko uTaayaa
 Ila-ERG necklace-ACC lift.PFV
 ‘Ila lifted the necklace’

(4) *Hindi (Mohanan 1990: 94)*

a. **Actor (volitional or non-volitional)**
 Vah cillaaya
 he.NOM shout/scream.PFV
 ‘He screamed’

b. **Volitional Actor**
 Us-ne cillaaya
 he.ERG shout/scream.PFV
 ‘He shouted (deliberately)’

- ❖ Differential marking is also known to be affected by INFORMATION STRUCTURE and the status of an argument as topic or focus:
 - Topic is the entity that the speaker identifies as most relevant to a given context and about which the proposition is made (Krifka 2008, Lambrecht 1994).
 - Focus is the informative part of an utterance or proposition that allows information to be updated and typically indicates the presence of alternatives (Krifka 2008, Lambrecht 1994).
- ❖ Differential object marking (DOM) often overtly marks topical objects (Iemmolo 2010, Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011)

(5) *Neo-Aramaic (Iemmolo 2010: 139)*

a. **Topical Object**

pəš-lə ham-āwu zəl-lə | pláxp
 become.PST-3SG.M also-he go.PST-3SG.M working

gebəd-malko | ta-t-qātəl-lə ta malko
 chez-king for-that-kill.3SG.M-OBJ.3SG.M DOM king
 ‘He too went to work with the king, in order to kill the king’

b. **Non-topical Object**

mán xze-lux tā? lxze-li tómp
 who see.PST-2SG.M there see.PST-1SG Thomas
 ‘Who did you see there?’ ‘I saw Thomas’

- ❖ Differential actor marking (DAM) often overtly marks focused/contrasted actors (Fauconnier and Verstraete 2014, McGregor 2010, Witzlack-Makarevich and Seržant 2018)

- (6) *Central (Lhasa) Tibetan*
- a. **Given Actor** (context: ‘what does he do?’)
 khōng khāla’ so_kiyo:re’
 he food make-IPFV.GNOM
 ‘He prepares the meals.’
- b. **Contrasted actor**
 khōng-ki’ khāla’ so_kiyo:re’
 he-ERG food make-IPFV.GNOM
 ‘He prepares the meals.’ (Tournadre 1995: 264)

- ❖ These correlations are well documented in the literature, particularly in languages with accusative alignment (in the case of DOM) and ergative alignment (in the case of DAM)² (Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011, De Hoop and De Swart 2008, Fauconnier and Verstraete 2014, Iemmolo 2010, McGregor 2010, Witzlack-Makarevich and Seržant 2018).
- ❖ Q. Is the pattern related to grammatical function (subject vs object) or semantic role (actor vs undergoer)?

3. Symmetrical Voice and Grammatical Functions

- ❖ Western Austronesian languages – including both Kelabit and Lun Bawang – are known for their systems of symmetrical voice alternations.
- ❖ These are alternations in the mapping of arguments to functions without changes in morphosyntactic transitivity (Himmelmann 2005, Riesberg 2014)
- ❖ In other words, there are multiple transitive clauses with two or more core arguments.
- ❖ This can be illustrated from Kelabit using the root *laak* ‘cook’:

- (7) *Kelabit*³
- a. **Actor Voice**
- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Nengelaak | <i>nuba</i> ’ | tesineh nedih |
| PFV.AV.cook | rice | mother 3SG.POSS |
- ‘Her mother cooked rice’
- b. **Undergoer Voice**
- | | | |
|-------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Linaak | <i>tesineh nedih</i> | nuba’ |
| PFV.UV.cook | mother 3SG.POSS | rice |
- ‘Her mother cooked rice’

² DAM is common in the Australia-Papua New Guinea region, as well as the Himalayas (McGregor 2010), and has been discussed in languages such as Jaminjung (Mirndi, Australia) (Schultze-Berndt 2018), Kuuk Thaayorre (Paman, Australia) (Gaby 2010), Ku Waru (Papuan, Papua New Guinea) (Witzlack-Makarevich and Seržant 2018) and Manange (Tamangic, Nepal) (Bond, Hildebrandt, and Dhakal 2013) but has also been identified in languages outside the region, such as Tariana (Maipurean, Brazil) (Aikhenvald 1994), Ecuadorian Siona (Tukanoan, Ecuador) (Bruil 2016) and Wan (Mande, Côte d’Ivoire) (Nikitina 2018).

³ 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.

- ❖ Both (7a) and (7b) express the same event of a mother cooking rice and both are syntactically transitive with two core arguments.
- ❖ However, they differ in terms of which argument is mapped to which function and this is reflected in the verbal morphology:

Table 1. Grammatical Functions in AV and UV

	actor	undergoer
actor voice	subject	non-subject core
undergoer voice	non-subject core	subject

- ❖ Henceforth, subjects are marked with **bold** and non-subject core arguments with *italics*
- ❖ The symmetrical voice analysis is not uncontroversial, particularly the mapping of actor to object and undergoer to subject in UV.
- ❖ Some claim that the languages are actually ergative (with AV as an antipassive alternation) (Aldridge 2004, 2012) and others treat them as pragmatic alternations in topic/focus (Klaiman 1991, Schachter 1976).
- ❖ However, for Kelabit and Lun Bawang the symmetrical voice analysis is supported by morphosyntactic phenomena.
- ❖ Firstly, for nominal arguments AV actor/undergoer and UV actor/undergoer are expressed as NPs, whilst obliques are PPs:

(8) *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'

(9) *Lun Bawang Obliques*

a. **Actor Voice**

Delai dih nemerey *bera* [kuan anak ieh]_{PP}
 man DEM AV.PFV.give rice for child 3SG.NOM
 'The man gave rice to his child'

b. **Undergoer Voice**

Uko' dih bibal *delai dih* [makai kayuh]_{PP}
 dog DEM UV.PFV.hit man DEM use stick
 'The man hit the dog with a stick'

- ❖ Secondly, AV actors and UV undergoers have several unique syntactic properties that are associated with subjects cross-linguistically.
- ❖ E.g. there is an Austronesian extraction restriction that only AV actors and UV undergoers can be relativized on:

(10) *Kelabit Relativisation*

a. **Actor Voice Relative Clause**

la'ih [suk nenekul *nuba'*]
 man REL PFV.AV.spoon rice
 'the man who spooned up rice'

b. **nuba'* [suk nenekul **la'ih sineh**]

rice REL UV.PFV.spoon man DEM
 For: 'the rice that the man spooned up'

c. **Undergoer Voice Relative Clause**

nuba' [suk sikul *la'ih sineh*]
 rice REL UV.PFV.spoon man DEM
 'the rice that the man spooned up'

d. **la'ih* [suk sikul **nuba'**]

man REL UV.PFV.spoon rice
 For: 'the man who spooned up rice'

(11) *Lun Bawang Relativisation*

a. **Actor Voice Relative Clause**

Delai dih [luk nemabal *uko'* makai kayuh]
 Man DEM REL AV.PFV.hit dog with stick
 'This is the man who hit the dog with the stick'

b. **Uko'* [luk nemabal delai dih makai kayuh]

dog REL AV.PFV.hit man DEM use stick
 For: 'It was the dog that the man hit with a stick'

c. **Undergoer Voice Relative Clause**

Uko' [luk binabal *delai dih* makai kayuh]
 Dog REL UV.PFV.hit man DEM use stick
 'It was the dog that the man hit with a stick'

d. **Delai dih* [luk binabal uko' dih makai kayuh]

man DEM REL UV.PFV.hit dog DEM with stick
 For: this is the man who hit the dog with a stick'

- ❖ E.g. in control constructions, it is always the AV actor and UV undergoer that is the gapped subject in the embedded clause:

(12) *Kelabit Controllees*

a. **Actor Voice**

La'ih sineh nemerey *dedtur sidih* ngimalem [nibu *padey*]
 man DEM AV.PFV.give woman DEM yesterday AV.plant rice
 'The man allowed the woman yesterday to plant rice'

b. ***la'ih sineh** nemerey *padey* ngimalem [nibu **dedtur sidih**]
 man DEM AV.PFV.give rice yesterday AV.plant woman DEM
 For: 'The man allowed the woman yesterday to plant rice'

c. **Undergoer Voice**

La'ih sineh nemerey *padey* ngimalem [sebuwen *dedtur sidih*]
 man DEM AV.PFV.give rice yesterday UV.IRR.plant women DEM
 'The man gave some rice yesterday for the woman to plant'

d. ***la'ih sineh** nemerey *dedtur sidih* ngimalem [sebuwen **padey**]
 man DEM AV.PFV.give woman DEM yesterday UV.IRR.plant rice
 For: 'The man gave some rice yesterday for the woman to plant'

(13) *Lun Bawang Control/Permissive Constructions*

a. **Actor Voice**

Merey **uih** *keneh* [kuman *nuba'*]
 AV.give 1SG.NOM 3SG.OBL AV.eat rice
 For: 'I let her eat rice'

b. *Merey **uih** *nuba'* [kuman **ieh**]
 AV.give 1SG.NOM rice [AV.eat 3SG.NOM]
 For: 'I give her rice to eat'

c. **Undergoer Voice**

Merey **uih** *nuba'* [kenen *ieh*]
 AV.give 1SG.NOM rice [UV.IRR.eat 3SG.NOM]
 'I give her rice to eat'

d. *Merey **uih** *keneh* [kenen **nuba'**]
 AV.give 1SG.NOM 3SG.OBL UV.IRR.eat rice
 For: 'I let her eat rice'

- ❖ Finally, the AV undergoer and UV actor also share syntactic properties that are associated with objects.

❖ They form a close constituent with the verb and adjuncts of time cannot intervene:

(14) *Kelabit - Post-verbal Position (adjuncts of time)*

a. **Actor Voice**

La'ih sineh ne-kuman (*ngimalem) *bua' kaber*
 man DEM PFV-AV.eat (*yesterday) fruit pineapple
 For: 'I ate pineapple yesterday'

b. **La'ih sineh** nenekul *nuba' (ngimalem) ngen tekul*
 man DEM AV.PFV.spoon rice yesterday with spoon
 'The man spooned up rice yesterday with a spoon'

c. **Undergoer Voice**

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

d. **Nuba' sikul** *la'ih sineh (ngimalem) ngen tekul*
 rice UV.PFV.spoon man DEM yesterday with spoon
 'The man spooned up the rice yesterday with a spoon'

(15) *Lun Bawang – Post-verbal position (adjuncts of time)*

a. **Actor Voice**

Delai dih nekuman (*pekaak na) *nuba'*
 man DEM AV.PFV.eat morning earlier rice
 For: 'The man ate rice earlier this morning'

b. **Delai dih** nemabal *uko' dih (nalem) makai kayuh*
 Man DEM AV.PFV.hit dog DEM yesterday use stick
 'The man hit the dog (yesterday) with a stick'

c. **Undergoer Voice**

Nuba' dih kinan (*pekaak na) *delai dih*
 rice DEM UV.PFV.eat morning earlier man DEM
 For: 'The man ate rice earlier this morning'

d. **Uko' dih** binabal *delai dih (nalem) makai kayuh*
 Dog DEM UV.PFV.hit man DEM yesterday use stick
 'The man hit the dog (yesterday) with a stick'

- ❖ Similarly, obliques/adjuncts can be fronted before a pre-verbal subject but AV undergoers and UV actors cannot:

(16) *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'

(17) *Lun Bawang Adjunct Fronting*

a. **Fronted AV Oblique**

[Nan anak ieh dih], **delai dih** nemare nuba' dih
 to child 3SG DEM man DEM AV.PFV.give rice DEM
 'To his child, the man gave the rice'

b. **Fronted AV Undergoer**

*Nuba' dih, **delai dih** nemare [nan anak ieh dih]
 rice DEM man DEM AV.PFV.give to child 3SG DEM
 For: 'rice, the man gave to his child'

c. **Fronted UV Oblique**

[Nan anak ieh dih], **nuba' dih** bire delai dih
 to child 3SG DEM rice DEM UV.PFV.give man dem
 'To his child, the rice was given by the man'

d. **Fronted UV Oblique**

*Delai dih, **nuba' bire** [nan anak ieh dih]
 man DEM rice UV.PFV.give to child 3SG DEM
 For: 'The man, the rice was given to his child'

- ❖ These facts support the symmetrical voice analysis and the mapping of arguments to functions in Table 1.

- ❖ This makes Western Austronesian languages an interesting case-study for differential marking typology since they are neither ergative nor accusative and have actor objects and undergoer subjects!

3.1 Case-Marking and Austronesian

- ❖ In the more conservative WAn languages, case-marking is used to indicate the **function** of an argument within the voice system.
- ❖ Typically, three case distinctions are assumed, which I give the following labels following Kroeger's (1993) analysis of Tagalog and widespread use in Austronesian literature:
 - NOM – subjects (i.e. AV actor, UV undergoer etc.)
 - GEN – non-subject actors (e.g. UV actor.)
 - OBL – obliques and definite non-subject undergoers (e.g. AV undergoer)

(18) *Kimaragang Dusun*

a. **Actor Voice**

Mangalapak **okuh** *do* *niyuw.*
 AV.TR.split 1SG.NOM GEN coconut
 'I will split a coconut/some coconuts.'

b. **Undergoer Voice**

Lapak-on *kuh* **it** **niyuw.**
 split-UV 1SG.GEN NOM coconut
 'I will split the coconut(s).'

c. **Instrumental Voice (IV)**

Nokuroh.tu n-i-lapak *nuh* *do* *niyuw* *inoh*
 why PST-IV-split 2SG.GEN GEN coconut MED.NOM

dangol kuh?
 knife 1SG.GEN
 'Why did you use my bush knife to split coconuts?' (Kroeger 2005)

- ❖ In the languages of Northern Sarawak, the function of arguments is reflected in their word order positions (non-subject arguments are fixed directly after the verb) and case marking is restricted to pronouns.
- ❖ Lundayeh (a related language to Kelabit/Lun Bawang), preserves the same sort of distribution of case forms is preserved as in Kimaragang:

Table 2. Case-marking in (Kemaloh) Lundayeh

	actor	undergoer
AV	NOM	OBL
UV	GEN	NOM

(19) *Lundayeh (Kemaloh)*

a. **Actor Voice**

Iko nguit *neneh* amé nekuh.
 2SG.NOM AV.bring 3SG.OBL go 1SG.OBL
 ‘You bring him to me.’

b. **Undergoer Voice**

Inapung *kuh* **ieh** rat neneh.
 UV.PFV.hide 1SG.GEN 3SG.NOM from 3SG.OBL
 ‘I hid it from him.’ (Clayre 2005: 25)

- ❖ However, the patterns in Kelabit and Ba Kelalan Lun Bawang are different – and represent instances of differential marking.
- ❖ Let’s now explore the patterns and see what motivates the choice of case form!

4. Differential Actor Marking in Kelabit

- ❖ Kelabit is a Western Austronesian language spoken mainly in the fourth and fifth divisions of Northern Sarawak, Malaysia.
- ❖ It is a member of the Apad Uat subgroup which also includes Lun Bawang/Lundayeh, and Sa’ban (Kroeger 1998).
- ❖ As seen above, Kelabit has a symmetrical voice system. The function of arguments within the voice system is reflected in their position in the clause and case-marking is restricted to a reduced subset of the pronouns in 1SG, 2SG, 3SG and 3PL:

Table 3. Kelabit case-marked pronouns

	NOM	GEN
1SG	uuh	kuh
2SG	iko	muh
3SG	ieh	neh
3PL	ideh	deh

- ❖ The pronouns are labelled NOM and GEN on the basis that they appear cognate with NOM and GEN forms in more conservative languages like Kimaragang.
- ❖ However, NOM and GEN forms alternate as a way of expressing the UV actor (object)

Table 4. Case-marking in (Bario) Kelabit

	actor	undergoer
AV	NOM	NOM
UV	GEN/NOM	NOM

(20) *Kelabit (Bario)*

a. **Actor Voice**

Uih	ni'er	ieh
1SG.NOM	AV.see	3SG.NOM

'I see him.'

b. **Undergoer Voice (GEN actor)**

Seni'er	kuh	t=ieh
UV.see	1SG.GEN	PT=3SG.NOM

'I saw him'

c. **Undergoer Voice (NOM actor)**

Seni'er	uih	t=ieh
UV.see	1SG.NOM	PT=3SG.NOM

'I saw him'

- ❖ Q. what triggers the choice of NOM vs GEN? How does it compare to DOM and DAM in other languages?
- ❖ Since we are dealing with pronouns, it is unlikely that animacy/ referentiality/ definiteness distinctions play a role. Is it also unclear how event semantics would play a role, since UV is associated with properties of high semantic transitivity (Hemmings 2015, forthcoming).
- ❖ This leaves information structure...

4.1 Differential Marking and Information Structure in Kelabit

- ❖ In Kelabit, the choice of NOM and GEN appears to follow a similar pattern to DAM – GEN pronouns mark continuing topics (the default function of both actors and pronouns), whilst NOM pronouns indicate focus/contrast.
- ❖ This can be seen from spontaneous examples in the corpus and also some elicited information structure diagnostic tests

4.1.1 Corpus Examples

- ❖ GEN actors are by far the most frequent in the naturalistic corpus. However, this may reflect the genres analysed (predominantly single speaker folk stories, personal narratives and news reports)
- ❖ In this c. 12,000 word sub-corpus, there were 183 examples of UV clauses. Of these, 122 had pronominal actors in 1SG, 2SG, 3SG and 3PL. 119 of these pronouns were GEN – particularly in contexts where the actor is a continuing topic:

(21) *Kelabit GEN as continuing topic*

Ieh keli' neh kuyad
3SG.NOM see PT monkey
'She saw the monkey'

laya' iat **neh** ngen kuyad dih
low spirit 3SG.GEN with monkey DEM
'And was unhappy about the monkey'

Nalap [*neh*]_{topic} **pupu'**
UV.PFV.fetch 3SG.GEN hitting.implement
'She [Dayang Beladan] fetched something to hit with'

Nukab [*neh*]_{topic} **bubpu'** **daan**
UV.PFV.open 3SG.GEN door hut
'Opened the door to the hut'

Nalap [*neh*]_{topic} **dteh** **kayuh**
UV.PFV.fetch 3SG.GEN one stick
'Picked up a piece of wood'

Nulin [*neh*]_{topic} **kuyad** **sineh**
UV.PFV.throw 3SG.GEN monkey DEM
'And threw it at the monkey'

Am neto' **kuyad** **sineh** ne-kasau *ieh* mudtih lah
NEG PT monkey DEM PFV-bother 1SG.NOM end PT
'After that the monkey didn't bother her anymore.'
(narrative, PDA10112013CH_01)

- ❖ In contrast, the NOM pronouns show up more frequently in multi-speaker conversations – where the actor is in focus and/or contrasted.

(22) *Kelabit NOM as focus*

Uih keli' naru' *baney* let uih i't ngilad
1SG.NOM know AV.make necklace from 1SG.NOM small past

Nuuk maya' edteh tetepuh menaken kuh keyh
AV.string follow one great.aunt 1SG.GEN PT
'I've known how to make necklaces since I was young, I used to string beads following a great aunt of mine' [...]

Nuuk teh **kedieh** *petaa* ngilad, *petaa* *ba'o rawir*
AV.string PT 3SG.EMPH bead.cap past bead.cap rawir.bead
'She would make bead caps in the past, of orange beads'

En *kuh* ni'er **ieh** naru' ih
 UV 1SG.GEN AV.see 3SG.NOM AV.make DEM
 'I'd watch her doing it'

Naru' **n=uih** *petaa* *ba'o* *rawir*
 Av.make pt=1sg.nom bead.cap beed rawir
 'Then I'd make my own orange bead cap'

[Kayu' inih]_{HT}, senuuk [*uih*]_{focus} **neh.**
 Like DEM UV.PFV.string 1SG.NOM DEM
 'Like that one, I strung that [pointing to the bead cap on the table].'

(23) *Kelabit NOM as focus* (conversation, BAR08092014CH_05)

a. Kadi' madi' **kedinarih,** ku kuwan *iko* *ih*
 but small IMP as UV.IRR.say 2SG.NOM DEM
 'But I was younger, as you said'

b. (conversation, PUM18102013CH_01)

Suk apéh? **suk** belaan *iko* *ih*
 REL which REL UV.IRR.say 2SG.NOM DEM
 'Which one?' 'The one that you said!'

4.1.2 Elicited Judgements

- ❖ The use of GEN for continuing topics and NOM for actors in focus is supported by information structure tests.

1. *Hanging Topic Test*

If the UV actor is established as a hanging topic, then only the GEN pronoun is possible as a resumptive pronoun in the main clause

- ❖ E.g. the judgements in (24) were elicited in a context licensing hanging topics:

Context: Once upon a time there were two people. One was called Peter. One was called Paul. Peter ate a pineapple...

(24) *Kelabit Hanging Topic Test*

a. **GEN marked actor**

Paul kedieh, kinan *neh* **bua'** **ebpuk**
 Paul 3SG.EMPH UV.PFV.eat 3SG.GEN fruit passion
 'As for Paul, he ate the passion fruit'

b. **NOM marked actor**

*/#Paul kedieh, kinan *ieh* **bua'** **ebpuk**
 Paul 3SG.EMPH UV.PFV.eat 3SG.NOM fruit passion
 For: 'As for Paul, he ate passion fruit'

❖ There are also examples from a translation study:⁴

(25) Na'am teh **tubang** tupu ngenep *labo i'eyk*.
 NEG PT wolf only AV.catch rat
 'It's not just wolves that catch rats'

[Useyng peh], debpen *deh* teh **labo i'eyk**
 cat PT UV.IRR.catch 3PL.GEN PT rat
 'Cats, they also catch rats'.

2. Question-Answer Test

If the UV actor is questioned, only NOM is a possible answer

(26) *Kelabit Narrow Focus Test*
 seni'er *iih* **t=ieh?**
 UV.PFV.see who PT=3SG.NOM
 'who saw him?'

a. NOM marked actor

seni'er *uih* **t=ieh**
 UV.PFV.see 1SG.NOM PT=3SG.NOM
 'I saw him'

b. GEN marked actor

*seni'er *kuh* **t=ieh**
 UV.PFV.see 1SG.GEN PT=3SG.NOM
 For: 'I saw him'

3. Focus Particle Test

The NOM actor can be followed by a focus particle which only scopes over the actor. If a GEN actor is followed by the focus particle, the particle necessarily also scopes over the predicate.

(27) *Kelabit focus particle test*

a. NOM marked actor

Pinupu' *uih* tupu **t=ieh**
 UV.PFV.hit 1SG.NOM only PT=3SG.NOM
 'He was only hit by me' (and not hit by anyone else/and nothing else happened to him)

b. GEN marked actor

Pinupu' *kuh* tupu **t=ieh**
 UV.PFV.hit 1SG.GEN only PT=3SG.NOM
 'He was only hit by me' (and I didn't do anything else to him/nothing else happened to him)

⁴ prompt: translate 'it's not just wolves and foxes that catch rats. Cats also catch rats'

4. *Contrast Test*

NOM is preferred when the UV actor is overtly contrasted.

- ❖ This can be seen from the following judgements in a context where the actor is contrasted and a context where the undergoer is contrasted:

(28) *Kelabit Contrast Test (contrasted actor)*

b. **NOM marked actor**

Pinupu' uih t=ieh pu'un, am dih iko
 UV.PFV.hit 1SG.NOM PT=3SG.NOM first NEG DEM 2SG.NOM
 'I hit him first, not you' (i.e. you didn't hit him first)

c. **GEN marked actor**

*/#Pinupu' kuh t=ieh pu'un, am dih iko
 UV.PFV.hit 1SG.GEN PT=3SG.NOM first NEG DEM 2SG.NOM
 For: 'I hit him first, not you' (i.e. you didn't hit him first)

(29) *Kelabit Contrast Test (contrasted undergoer)*

a. **GEN marked actor**

Ieh teh suk pinupu' kuh, am dih iko
 3SG.NOM PT REL UV.PFV.hit 1SG.GEN NEG DEM 2SG.NOM
 'He's the one I hit, not you' (i.e. I didn't hit you)

b. **NOM marked actor**

*/#Ieh teh suk pinupu' uih, am dih iko
 3SG.NOM PT REL UV.PFV.hit 1SG.NOM NEG DEM 2SG.NOM
 For: 'He's the one I hit, not you' (i.e. I didn't hit you)

Table 5. Information structure diagnostics

Test	NOM actor	GEN actor
Hanging Topic Actor	X	✓
Focus Actor (Question)	✓	X
Focus Actor (Particle)	✓	X
Contrasted Actor	✓	X
Contrasted Undergoer	X	✓

- ❖ In other words, the choice of NOM vs GEN appears to be affected by information structure in similar ways to DAM in other languages: the unexpected status of the actor as focus is marked with an unexpected case choice!

5. Differential Undergoer Marking in Lun Bawang

- ❖ Lun Bawang is also an Apad Uat language spoken in Northern Sarawak. It can be considered the same language as Lundayeh (the name for the language across the border in Sabah and in Kalimantan). However, there are a number of different dialects and this talk uses data from the Ba Kelalan dialect.
- ❖ It is worth noting that the Ba Kelalan dialect is considered non-standard and that the Long Semado dialect (which appears in the Lun Bawang bible translation) is used for written communication or formal speech – this can be a challenge when doing elicitation!
- ❖ The Ba' Kelalan dialect of Lun Bawang has a symmetrical voice system and, like Lundayeh, preserves NOM, GEN⁵ and OBL pronoun forms:

Table 6. Lun Bawang (Ba Kelalan) Pronouns

	NOM	GEN	OBL
1SG	uih	kuh	kuih
2SG	iko	muh	kemuh
3SG	ieh	neh	keneh
3PL	ideh	deh	kedeh

- ❖ However, as with Kelabit, the distribution of forms is different from the expected Austronesian pattern: OBL and NOM alternate as a means of expressing undergoers in both AV and UV:

Table 7. Case-marking in (Ba' Kelalan) Lun Bawang

	actor	undergoer
AV	NOM	OBL/NOM
UV	NOM	OBL/NOM

(30) *Lun Bawang (Ba' Kelalan)*

a. **Actor Voice**

Yudan nemefet *keneh*
 Yudan AV.PFV.hit 3SG.OBL
 'Yudan hit him'

b. **Yudan** nemefet *ieh*
 Yudan AV.PFV.hit 3SG.NOM
 'Yudan hit him'

⁵ Nb. GEN forms as listed above are sometimes used for UV actors but NOM seems to be the default – GEN may be a feature of Long Semado Lun Bawang.

- c. **Undergoer Voice**
 Bifet *iYudan* **keneh**
 UV.PFV.hit Yudan 3SG.OBL
 ‘Yudan hit him’
- d. Bifet *iYudan* **ieh**
 UV.PFV.hit Yudan 3SG.NOM
 ‘Yudan hit him’

- ❖ In other words, we not only find a pattern of differential marking for the undergoer in AV where it is an object – but also in UV where it is a subject. This is unusual both from a cross-linguistic and Austronesian perspective!
- ❖ Q. what determines the choice of NOM vs OBL?

5.1 Differential Marking and Information Structure in Lun Bawang

- ❖ The results are more preliminary and much less conclusive than for Kelabit – however it is possible that information does indeed play a role and that (as in other cases of DOM) an OBL undergoer is a topic.
- ❖ This may have started with a reanalysis of the OBL form as a marker of topical undergoers in AV and spread to mark topics (or non-focus undergoers) in UV.
- ❖ Disclaimer: there are few naturally occurring examples (except of OBL AV undergoers) and elicited judgements need to be checked with other speakers.

5.1.1 Corpus Examples of AV

- ❖ Impressionistically, AV is much more frequent than UV. When the AV undergoer is a pronoun, it is likely to be OBL and topical (default function of pronouns?)

(31) *Lun Bawang OBL AV undergoer as topic*

- a. dih **Bungkaak** nenaat *ki=Tuwau* feh
 and crow AV.PFV.paint OBL=argus.pheasant PT

naru’ *keneh* roo’-roo’ taga [...]
 AV.make 3SG.OBL good-REDUP pretty
 ‘and so Crow painted Argus Pheasant to make him beautiful’

Dih Bungkaak mada’ “uih ieh feh, keneh”
 DEM crow AV.say 1SG.NOM 3SG.NOM PT he.said

“iko naat *kuih* feh, keneh”
 2SG.NOM AV.paint 1SG.OBL PT he.said

‘Then the Crow said, “now, it’s my turn, you paint me now, he said.”
 (folk story, BAK20171101CH_03)

- b. Idih kereb ineh teluh anak lai lemaba
 DEM time DEM three child boy pass
 ‘At that time the three boys went past’

Ieh nier *kedeh*
 3SG.NOM AV.look 3PL.OBL
 ‘He looked at them’

A **ieh** nitun *kedeh*
 NEG 3SG.NOM AV.ask 3PL.OBL
 ‘But he didn’t ask them’

Mecing co sinih, a keli’ ieh ne’ iapeh buah’ ieh dih
 Until day this NEG know 3SG.NOM go.PST where fruit 3SG.NOM DEM
 ‘To this day, he still doesn’t know where his fruit went’
 (pear story, BAK20190301CH07)

- ❖ There are also examples from a text translation study where undergoers are established as topics. The OBL pronoun is used:

- (32) Uko’ uih sebuleng uko’ luk a nan awang niat
 dog 1SG.NOM one.CL dog REL NEG EXIST happiness

Ieh tican, a **lun** nesa’ *keneh*
 3SG.NOM UV.PFV.leave NEG people care 3SG.OBL
 ‘He was abandoned, no-one looked after him’

idih le-le ieh nate kereb ieh isuut
 DEM almost 3SG.NOM die.PST time 3SG.NOM small
 ‘And he almost died when he was small.’ (stimuli, BAK20190220CH_01)

- (33) Kinanak cur uih dih idih uko’ uih dih
 sibling girl 1SG.NOM DEM and dog 1SG.NOM DEM

na miek pesipu.
 NEG able get.along
 ‘My sister and my dog do not get along’

Uko’ uih **dih** megai’ mangang *keneh*
 dog 1SG.NOM DEM always AV.bark 3SG.OBL
 ‘My dog always barks at her’

idih netep *keneh* serefu’
 and AV.bite 3SG.OBL sometimes
 ‘And sometimes bites her’ (stimuli, BAK20190220CH_01)

- ❖ In contrast, NOM undergoers may be less topical/not the primary topic:

(34) *Lun Bawang NOM undergoer*

Dih ceh anak, anak delai [...]

DEM one child, child boy

‘A child appears, a boy’

Lemaba ieh yang buah’ kiran neh
pass 3SG.NOM under fruit terap DEM

‘He passes under the fruit tree’

Kereb ieh lemaba
time 3SG.NOM pass

‘As he goes by’

Dih **ieh** nier *ieh* nge’ luun
DEM 3SG.NOM AV.see 3SG.NOM there upon

‘He looks at him [the man] up there’

A **delai dih** nier *keneh*
NEG man DEM AV.see 3SG.OBL

‘But the man isn’t looking at him’ (pear story, BAK20190227CH_01)

- ❖ All other naturally occurring examples are inanimate/non-human entities, which are less likely to be topical (Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011):

(35) *Lun Bawang NOM undergoer*

a. Mo, naru’ **kiteh** *ieh* *keneh*
Yes, AV.do 1DU.INCL 3SG.NOM he.said

‘Yes, let’s do it, he said’ (folk story, BAK20171101CH_03)

b. Dih **ieh** nenated *ieh* ne’ me’ bang bakul
DEM 3SG.NOM AV.PFV.send 3SG.NOM go.pst to in basket

‘Then he put it into the basket’ (pear story, BAK20190227CH_01)

c. Dih **kai** lulun-lulun *gula dih* su dih [...]
DEM 1PL.EXCL roll-REDUP sugar DEM place DEM

‘Then we roll sugar on top of it’

Metueh **dih, dih ko** nalan luun tana’
ADJ.hard DEM DEM 2SG.NOM walk on ground

‘When it’s hard then you walk around’

Ana’-ana’ **ko** nguit *ieh*
Proud-REDUP 2SG.NOM AV.take 3SG.NOM

‘proudly carrying it’

- ❖ BUT, not the case that all inanimate objects are NOM:

(36) *Lun Bawang NOM undergoer*

- a. **Dih** **ieh** nenutun mila' *keneh*
 DEM 3SG.NOM AV.PFV.try AV.lick 3SG.OBL
 'Then he tried to lick it [the water from the salt spring]'
 (text, BAK20190223CH_03)

- b. **diteluh** nganam-nganam *bua'* *dih* **peh**
 3PAU AV-collect-REDUP fruit DEM PT
 'The three of them collected up the fruit'

nipa *keneh* bang bakul lemubed
 AV.pack 3SG.OBL in basket return
 'And put it back in the basket' (pear story, BAK20190223CH_04)

- ❖ Consequently, OBL forms appear to be used for topical undergoers (perhaps the default for pronouns) – NOM forms tend to appear on less topical entities.

5.1.2 Corpus Examples of UV

- ❖ There are far fewer naturally occurring examples of UV constructions.
- ❖ The only example of an UV construction with *keneh* is (37) – both actor and undergoer are given in the previous context:

(37) *Lun Bawang OBL UV undergoer*

Nan **peh** laa nih feh, bera luk binabeh ko
 EXIST PT extra DEM PT rice REL UV.PFV.carry 2SG.NOM

rat tunge' nih feh [...]
 from here DEM PT

'If there is extra, of the rice that you brought from here'

dih ideh masui dih bang kedai feh
 DEM 3PL.NOM AV.sell DEM in shop PT
 'Then they sell it at the shops'

merufu' uen *deh* masui **keneh**
 sometimes UV.do 3PL.GEN AV.masui 3SG.OBL
 'Sometimes when they sell it'

tuda' neh raga ieh
 how.much PT price 3SG.NOM
 'Whatever they sell it for'

neh nan kai melih gula
 DEM EXIST 1PL.EXCL AV.buy sugar
 ‘That’s what we used to buy sugar’ (text, BAK20190223CH_02)

- ❖ Similarly, the following sentence was elicited as examples of how to use the word *bifet* ‘UV.PFV.hit’ – the undergoer remains a topic in the subordinate clause:

(38) *Lun Bawang*

- a. Bifet uih **keneh** ngaceku ieh pelaba lalid
 UV.PFV.hit 1SG OBL.3SG because 3SG very naughty
 ‘I hit him because he was very naughty’

- ❖ Hence, it is possible that OBL is used where the undergoer is topical.
- ❖ The few cases of NOM undergoers in UV also appear to be inanimate/non-human – could there be a sense of contrast?:

(39) *Lun Bawang*

- c. Kudeng peh **angkat dih** mefeh, **ieh** melaak tuu peh,
 If PT branch DEM fall 3SG.NOM dry real PT

angkat kayuh dih
 branch tree DEM

‘If a branch falls down, even if it is a very dry branch’

A **ieh** miek lapen ku kabaa
 NEG 3SG.NOM able UV.IRR.take for firewood
 ‘It cannot be used for firewood’ (text, BAK20190223CH_01)

- b. Inau’ ieh nerad **ieh**,
 UV.PFV.do 3SG.NOM AV.cut 3SG.NOM
 ‘He cut it [the tele tree] down’

dih **ieh** nginait *keneh* mate
 DEM 3SG.NOM AV.wait 3SG.OBL die

‘Then he waited to die’ (text, BAK20190223CH_01)

- c. Dih **deh** nengened *berek dih* feh
 DEM 3PL.NOM AV.PFV.dip.water pig DEM PT
 ‘Then they push the pig down into water’

Naru’ *keneh* ngirup fa’
 AV.make 3SG.OBL AV.drink water

‘Make him drink water’

Mecing feh **ineh** nge' kedai range' neh peh
 Arrive PT DEM there shop there DEM PT
 'And when it gets to the shops'

Uen nimang **ieh**
 UV.do AV.weigh 3SG.NOM
 'It gets weighed' (text, BAK20190223CH_02)

- ❖ In summary, very few examples to go on, but possible that OBL vs NOM is linked to topicality in UV as well.

5.1.2 Elicited Judgements

- ❖ Some tests support the idea that the OBL forms are associated with topicality.

1. *Question Test*

If the undergoer is given in the context of the question, OBL is preferred.

- ❖ The AV construction is preferred if the actor is in focus (34) and either the AV or UV construction is fine if both actor and undergoer are given (35):

(40) *Lun Bawang (Question Test)*

Irey nemefet *ki=Bulan?*
 who AV.PFV.hit OBL=Bulan
 'Who hit Bulan?'

A. **Yudan** nemefet *keneh*
 Yudan AV.PFV.hit 3SG.OBL
 'Yudan hit her'

B. */#**Yudan** nemefet *ieh*
 Yudan AV.PFV.hit 3SG.NOM
 For: 'Yudan hit her'

C. */#**Bifet** *Yudan* **keneh**
 UV.PFV.hit Yudan 3SG.OBL
 For: 'Yudan hit her'

D. */#**Bifet** *Yudan* **ieh**
 UV.PFV.hit Yudan 3SG.NOM
 For: 'Yudan hit her'

(41) *Lun Bawang (Question Test)*

Ngudeh **ieh** mefet *keneh?*
why 3SG.NOM AV.hit 3SG.OBL
'Why did he hit her?'

A. Bifet *ieh* **keneh** ngaceku **ieh** melalid
UV.PFV.hit 3SG.NOM 3SG.OBL because 3SG.NOM ADJ.naughty
'He hit her because she was naughty'

B. **Ieh** nemefet *keneh* ngaceku **ieh** melalid
3SG.NOM AV.PFV.hit OBL.3SG because 3SG.NOM ADJ.naughty
'He hit her because she was naughty'

❖ If the undergoer is questioned, however, then it is odd to use the OBL form:

(42) *Lun Bawang (Question Test)*

Irey bifet *i=Yudan?*
who UV.PFV.hit NOM=Yudan
'Who did Yudan hit?'

A. */#**Ieh** nemefet *kuih*
3SG.NOM AV.PFV.hit 1SG.OBL
For: 'He hit me'

B. */#Bifet *ieh* **kuih**
UV.PFV.hit 3SG.NOM 1SG.OBL
For: 'He hit me'

C. **i=uih** bifet *ieh*
NOM=1SG.NOM UV.PFV.hit 3SG.NOM
'He hit me'

D. **?Ieh** nemefet *uih*
3SG.NOM AV.PFV.hit 1SG.NOM
'He hit me'

2. *Contrast Test*

If the undergoer is contrasted, then it is odd to express the undergoer as OBL and NOM is preferred (in pre-verbal position)⁶

(43) *Lun Bawang (Contrast Test)*

nemefet Yudan ki=Bulan nalem feh?
AV.PFV.hit Yudan OBL=Bulan yesterday PT
'Did Yudan hit Bulan yesterday?'

⁶ Odd to have the NOM pronoun in clause-final position.

A. **NOM Undergoer**

A **i=Bulan** bifet Yudan feh,
 NEG NOM=Bulan UV.PFV.hit Yudang PT

iamo' **uih** (luk) bifet *ieh*
 but 1SG.NOM (REL) UV.PFV.hit 3SG.NOM
 'Yudan didn't hit Bulan, he hit me'

B. **OBL Undergoer**

*/#A **i=Bulan** bifet Yudan feh,
 NEG NOM=Bulan UV.PFV.hit Yudang PT

iamo' bifet *ieh* **kuih**
 but UV.PFV.hit 3SG.NOM 1SG.OBL
 For: 'Yudan didn't hit Bulan, he hit me'

- ❖ Nb. it is also judged ok to have the AV construction with an OBL undergoer in this context (is this because contrast is hard to elicit?)!

(44) A **i=Bulan** bifet *Yudan* feh,
 NEG NOM=Bulan UV.PFV.hit Yudang PT

iamo' **ieh** nemefet *kuih*
 but 3SG.NOM UV.PFV.hit 1SG.OBL
 'Yudan didn't hit Bulan, he hit me'

- ❖ However, if the actor is contrasted and the undergoer is given, then OBL is preferred:

(45) *Lun Bawang (Contrast Test)*

nemefet **Yudan** *ki=Bulan* nalem feh?
 AV.PFV.hit Yudan OBL=Bulan yesterday PT
 'Did Yudan hit Bulan yesterday?'

A. A **Yudan** nemefet *ki=Bulan* nalem feh,
 NEG Yudan AV.PFV.hit OBL=Bulan yesterday PT

Iamo' **i=Gituen** luk nemefet *keneh*
 but NOM=Gituen REL AV.PFV.hit 3SG.OBL
 'Yudan didn't hit Bulan yesterday, it was Gituen who hit her'

B. */#A **Yudan** nemefet *ki=Bulan* nalem feh,
 NEG Yudan AV.PFV.hit OBL=Bulan yesterday PT

Iamo' **i=Gituen** luk nemefet *ieh*
 but NOM=Gituen REL AV.PFV.hit 3SG.NOM
 For: 'Yudan didn't hit Bulan yesterday, it was Gituen who hit her'

C. */#A **Yudan** nemefet *ki=Bulan* nalem feh,
 NEG Yudan AV.PFV.hit OBL=Bulan yesterday PT

Iamo' bifet *i=Gituen* **keneh**
 but UV.PFV.hit NOM=Gituen 3SG.OBL

For: 'Yudan didn't hit Bulan yesterday, it was Gituen who hit her'

- ❖ Nb. the OBL form cannot appear pre-verbally or be clefted and clefting (as above) appears to be a way of expressing focus/contrast!

Table 8. Information structure diagnostics

Test	AV		UV	
	OBL	NOM	OBL	NOM
Focus actor/ given undergoer	✓	X	X	X
Given actor & given undergoer	✓	X	✓	X
Focus undergoer/given actor	X	?	X	✓
Contrasted Actor	✓	X	X(?)	X
Contrasted Undergoer	✓(?)	X	X	✓

- ❖ It isn't clear what prompts the choice of AV vs UV in Ba Kelalan Lun Bawang – generally AV is preferred with OBL undergoers.
- ❖ However, there does seem to be a tendency to mark topical undergoers using OBL and focus/contrasted undergoers with NOM. Hence, this appears to be a similar pattern to DOM cross-linguistically.

6. Implications

- ❖ There are several important implications to be drawn from the Kelabit and Lun Bawang patterns
- ❖ Implications for the typology of differential marking:
 - The link between DAM/DOM and the status of the actor as focus and the undergoer as topic is found in symmetrical voice languages as well as ergative and accusative languages.
 - This suggests that actors receive special marking when they are focused and undergoers receive special marking as topics regardless of their grammatical function – and that the pattern is triggered by semantic role rather than grammatical function.
 - It supports the idea that there is a tendency for actors to be topics and undergoers to be focus/secondary topics and for the unusual instance in which actors are focused/undergoers are primary topics to be overtly marked.

- ❖ Implications for the understanding of symmetrical voice & grammatical functions:
 - AV and UV alternations are not solely for the purpose of reflecting information structure (or the status of the actor and the undergoer as topic or focus)
 - There are other means of doing this – including word order, differential marking and constructions (e.g. hanging topic constructions, pseudo-cleft constructions)
 - This supports the idea that the voice alternations are alternations in grammatical functions – and that case-marking is independent of grammatical function in Kelabit.
 - Hence, it suggests that grammatical functions should be identified on the basis of syntactic properties rather than morphological encoding.

7. Conclusion

- ❖ In this talk, I have presented the case marking system in Bario Kelabit and Ba Kelalan Lun Bawang.
- ❖ In both languages, case-marking is restricted to pronouns and constitutes differential marking – since more than one option exists for marking the same semantic role in the same grammatical function.
- ❖ In Kelabit, UV actors can be expressed using either NOM or GEN pronouns. In Ba Kelalan Lun Bawang, undergoers in both AV and UV can be expressed using either NOM or OBL forms.
- ❖ Consequently, we have an example of a differentially marked actor that is also an object and a differentially marked undergoer that is also a subject – a perfect case study to explore the typology of differential marking!
- ❖ Kelabit seems to follow a similar pattern to DAM cross-linguistically – unexpected marking indicates a focus actor.
- ❖ In Lun Bawang, the patterns are less clear-cut – but there appears to be some link between topicality and the use of OBL forms (a common pattern of DOM)
- ❖ This has important implications:
 - Firstly, it suggests that case-marking in Northern Sarawak (and perhaps WAN more generally) does not relate to the grammatical function, but rather to semantic or discourse properties of the argument.
 - Hence, it suggests that oblique marking does not necessarily correlate with oblique function (contrary to ergative analyses of AV) and supports the idea that grammatical functions should be identified on the basis of syntactic rather encoding properties (Dalrymple 2001, Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011).
 - Finally, it suggests that patterns of differential marking may correlate with semantic role rather than grammatical function.
- ❖ Hence, a deeper understanding of case-marking choices in Northern Sarawak have important implications for Western Austronesian, the typology of differential marking and the study of grammatical functions
- ❖ It is hoped this paper will provide the foundation for future, more systematic study of the motivations for case choices and provide further insight into the relationship between morphological encoding, grammatical function and information structure.

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