Subjecthood and Case in Lun Bawang

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1. Introduction

- ❖ In this paper, I present an unusual pattern of (differential) case marking in the pronominal system of Lun Bawang, on the basis of preliminary fieldwork in Ba' Kelalan (Buduk Nur) in 2017.
- ❖ The main aims are:

  a. To illustrate how the **case system** in Ba' Kelalan differs from other Lun Bawang dialects and related languages.
  b. Consider the possible **implications** of differential marking for the relationship between morphological encoding, grammatical function and information structure.

- ❖ The route map is as follows:
  - ➢ Background on voice and grammatical functions in Lun Bawang
  - ➢ Case-marking in Lundayeh, Kelabit and Lun Bawang
  - ➢ Differential marking cross-linguistically
  - ➢ Differential marking in Lun Bawang
  - ➢ Conclusions

2. Background

- ❖ **Lun Bawang** is a Western Austronesian language spoken in Northern Sarawak, Malaysia in the Lawas, Limbang and Baram districts.
- ❖ It is part of the **Apad Uat** subgroup, which also includes Kelabit and Sa'ban, and has several dialects. Related dialects are also spoken across the borders in Sabah, Brunei and Kalimantan where the language is known as **Lundayeh**.
- ❖ Blust (1974 and elsewhere) argues that the Apad Uat languages, together with Kenyah, Berawan-Lower Baram and Bintulu, form the **North Sarawak** subgroup, and are more closely related to the Philippine-type languages of Sabah than the other Malayic and Land Dayak languages of Borneo (forming a higher level **North Borneo** group).

- ❖ There is relatively little documentation (especially of the Ba' Kelalan dialect)
- ❖ Most existing descriptions are based on **Kemaloh Lundayeh** of Kalimantan, for which there is a dictionary, several early descriptions by missionaries and some more recent typologically-oriented analyses (Ganang, Crain, and Pearson-Rounds 2008, Southwell 1949, Lees 1959, Clayre 2005, 2014).
- ❖ Blust (2016) gives a phonological description of the **Long Semado** dialect of Lun Bawang. This is the dialect used for Lun Bawang Bible, *Bala Luk Do'* (1982)
- ❖ There are also some textual materials from Lundayeh spoken in the Sipitang distict of **Sabah**, e.g. engagement negotiations (Crain 1982) and from the Lun Bawang spoken

in **Lawas** (Long Tuma), e.g. folk stories (Deegan and Usad 1972), spirit chants (Deegan 1970).

❖ Ricky Ganang (p.c.) says there are three main dialects of Lundayeh/Lun Bawang: Baa' (including Ba' Kelalan); Kemaloh and Lengilu'.

❖ Dialect differences are not well understood (at least by me!), but include phonological diffences (such as the pronounciation of [f] and [r] in Ba' Kelalan vs [p] and [d] in Long Semado), lexical differences (e.g. *naru'* (BK) vs *nganau'* (LS) for 'AV.make') and morphosyntactic differences, e.g. in the case-marking systems (see Section 3).

❖ Like other Western Austronesian (WAn) languages, Lun Bawang has a system of **symmetrical voice** alternations: these are alternations in the mapping of arguments to functions without changes in morphosyntactic transitivity (Himmelmann 2005, Riesberg 2014):[1]

(1)   *Lun Bawang*
   a.   **Actor Voice**
          ne'   nukat   *kelatih*   **uih**   nalem
          PFV.go AV.dig   worms   1SG.NOM   yesterday
          'I went to dig up worms yesterday'

          actor = subject, undergoer = object

   b.   **Undergoer Voice**
          Tinukat   *uih*   **kelatih**   **dih**   feh
          UV.PFV.dig   1SG.NOM   worms   DEM   PT
          'I already dug up the worms'

          undergoer = subject, actor = object

❖ Word order is variable (cf. Clayre 2014): the non-subject argument (*italics*) directly follows the verb, the subject argument (**bold**) is more flexible and can follow the non-subject argument, appear clause-finally or pre-verbally.

❖ The symmetrical voice analysis is not uncontroversial, particularly the mapping of actor to object and undergoer to subject in UV (see e.g. Aldridge 2004, 2012 for an alternative ergative analysis of WAn).

❖ However, for Lun Bawang it is supported by various morphosyntactic phenomena.

❖ Firstly, for nominal arguments AV actor/undergoer and UV actor/undergoer are expressed as NPs, whilst obliques are PPs:

(2)   *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'

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[1] There is also an instrumental voice construction in Lun Bawang in which the instrument is mapped to subject.

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.

❖ For example, there is an extraction restriction that only AV actors and UV undergoers can be relativized on:

(3)   *Lun Bawang Relativisation*
   a.   **Actor Voice**
      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**
      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 pipag **uko' dih**]
      man DEM REL UV.PFV.hit dog DEM
      For: this is the man who hit the dog'

❖ Similarly, only AV actors and UV undergoers can have *wh*-question words in initial position (non-subjects are questioned in-situ):

(4)   *Lun Bawang Questions*
   a.   **Actor Voice**
      Irey nemelih *bera neh*?
      who AV.PFV.buy rice DEM
      'Who bought that rice?

   b.   *Anun nemelih **delai dih**?
      what AV.PFV.buy man DEM
      For: 'What did the man buy?'

   b'.   Nemelih *anun* **delai dih**?
      AV.PFV.buy what man DEM
      'What did the man buy?'

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c. **Undergoer Voice**
Anun bilih *delai dih*?
What UV.PFV.buy man DEM
'What did the man buy?'

d. *Irey* bilih **bera dih**?
Who UV.PFV.buy rice DEM
For: 'who bought the rice?'

d'. Bilih *irey* **bera dih**?
UV.PFV.buy who rice DEM
'Who bought the rice?'

❖ Finally, in control constructions the controlled argument must always be an AV actor or UV undergoer. AV undergoers and UV actors cannot be targets for control (here bold/italics represents function in lower clause, but case-marking indicates that the arguments also function as objects/non-subjects in the higher clause):

(5) *Lun Bawang Control/Permissive Constructions*
a. **Actor Voice**
Merey uih **keneh** [kuman *nuba'*]
AV.give 1SG.NOM 3SG.OBL AV.eat rice
'I let her eat rice'

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

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

❖ As for the non-subject core arguments – the AV undergoer and UV actor – they both also share behavioural properties that identify them as core arguments (unlike passives and antipassives).
❖ This includes the fact that they both follow the verb and are ordered before obliques:

(6) *Lun Bawang – Post-verbal Position (core arguments vs obliques/subjects)*
a. **Actor Voice**
i=Bulan nemerey *bera* ki=Yudan
NOM=Bulan AV.PFV.give rice OBL=Yudan
'Bulan gave rice to Yudan'

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b. #**i=Bulan**   nemerey ki=Yudan *bera*
  NOM=Bulan   AV.PFV.give OBL=Yudan rice
  For: 'Bulan gave rice to Yudan'

c. **Undergoer Voice**
  Bera dih birey   *i=Bulan*   ki=Yudan
  Rice DEM UV.give   NOM=Bulan OBL=Yudan
  'Bulan gave rice to Yudan.'

d. *Pipag   **anak dih** *ieh*
  UV.PFV.hit child DEM 3SG.NOM
  For: 'he hit the child' (would mean 'the child hit him')

❖ Consequently, the AV undergoer and UV actor behave like non-subject core arguments rather than obliques. Thus, I will assume the argument to function mapping in Table 1:

Table 1. Grammatical Functions in AV and UV

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

3. Case Marking in Lun Bawang

❖ 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)

3.1 Lundayeh (Kemaloh)

❖ In Lundayeh, this system is preserved in the pronouns. However, nominal arguments are not case marked and grammatical function is reflected via word order (Clayre 2014):

(7) *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)

❖ Lundayeh also preserves a (reduced) system of case-marking on personal names: *i=* for subjects (and sometimes non-subjects); *ni=* for obliques/ non-subject undergoers in AV:

(8)   *Lundayeh (Kemaloh)*

    a. **Actor Voice - Actor**

i=Agong	ngenecuk	*nekuh*	ngarem	namu,	leh!
NOM=Agong	AV.PFV.order	1SG.OBL	AV.capsize	2SG.OBL	PT

       'man, Agong told me to capsize you!'

    b. **Actor Voice - Undergoer**

Uih	nenecat	*ni=Pengiran*
1SG.NOM	AV.PFV.hit	OBL=Pengiran

       'I hit Pengiran' (Clayre 2005: 26)

    c. **Actor Voice - Oblique**

Meré	*buku*	*ineh*	ni=Dawat
AV.give	book	DEM	OBL=Dawat

       'Give that book to Dawat!' (Clayre 2005: 22)

❖ Hence, in Lundayeh, the case-marking appears to reflect the function within the voice system, which is summarised in Table 2:

Table 2. Case-marking in (Kemaloh) Lundayeh

	actor	**undergoer**
AV	NOM	OBL
UV	GEN	NOM

3.2 Kelabit (Bario)

❖ In Kelabit, there are no (morphologically) OBL forms so NOM is used for both actor and undergoer in AV, and NOM and GEN alternate as a means of expressing UV actors:

(9)   *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*	**ieh**
UV.see	1SG.GEN	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'

- ❖ Hence, case marking does not serve the function of distinguishing the grammatical function of the argument within the voice system.
- ❖ The choice of NOM vs GEN in UV appears to be motivated by information structure: GEN actors represent continuing topics in discourse (the default function of actor pronouns?) and NOM is used when the actor is focused/contrasted. This is summarised in Table 3:

Table 3. Case-marking in (Bario) Kelabit

	actor	**undergoer**
AV	NOM	NOM
UV	GEN$_{TOPIC}$/NOM$_{FOCUS}$	NOM

3.3 Lun Bawang (Ba' Kelalan)

- ❖ In the Ba' Kelalan dialect of Lun Bawang, we find a case-system that is similar to Lundayeh in some respects, but also allows differential marking of the same grammatical function.
- ❖ Nb. the OBL pronoun set is formed via *ke-* combined with the GEN roots, i.e. *kekuh, kemuh, keneh*. Similarly, the OBL form for personal names is *ki=*
- ❖ It is possible to get the same case-marking patterns as illustrated for Lundayeh above:

(10)　　*Lun Bawang (Ba' Kelalan)*

a. **Actor Voice**

Uih	nemepag	*keneh*
1SG.NOM	AV.hit	3SG.OBL

'I hit him'

b.

Ieh	nemerey	*bera*	keneh[2]
3SG.NOM	AV.PFV.give	rice	3SG.OBL

'He gave rice to him'

c. **Undergoer Voice**

Pipag	*neh*	**ieh**
UV.PFV.slap	3SG.GEN	3SG.NOM

'He hit him'

- ❖ However, like Kelabit, UV actors can also be expressed with NOM (indeed this is more common than for Kelabit in elicitation contexts):

(11)　　*Lun Bawang (Ba' Kelalan)*

a. **NOM UV actor**

Kinan	uih	bua'	nih
UV.PFV.eat	1SG.NOM	fruit	DEM

'I've eaten the fruit'

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[2] OBL case-marking is obligatory for goals – NOM or unmarked forms cannot be substituted. OBL case is not used for all oblique semantic arguments, unlike Tagalog where *sa=* is more widely used (Latrouite 2011).

❖ Moreover, undergoers in both AV and UV (where it is the subject!) can be optionally marked with either NOM or OBL case:[3]

(12)   *Lun Bawang (Ba' Kelalan)*
   d.   **Actor Voice**
      Uih   nemepag   *keneh*
      1SG.NOM   AV.hit   3SG.OBL
      'I hit him'

   b.   **Uih**   nemepag   *ieh*
      1SG.NOM   AV.hit   3SG.NOM
      'I hit him (it?)'

   c.   **Undergoer Voice**
      Pipag   *neh*   **ieh**
      UV.PFV.slap 3SG.GEN   3SG.NOM
      'He hit him'

   d.   Pipag   *neh*   **keneh**
      UV.PFV.hit   3SG.GEN   3SG.OBL
      'He hit him'

   e.   Pipag   *ieh*   **keneh[4]**
      UV.PFV.hit   3SG.NOM   3SG.OBL
      'He hit him'

❖ The same is true of personal name markers: NOM, OBL and no marker are all possible options for undergoers in both AV and UV:

(13)   *Lun Bawang (Ba' Kelalan)*
   a.   **Actor Voice**
      Delai dih   nemepag   *ki=Yudan/*   *i=Yudan*   */Yudan*
      man DEM   AV.PFV.slap   OBL=Yudan   NOM=Yudan Yudan
      'The man slapped Yudan.'

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[3] Nb case alternation of NOM vs OBL also occurs as objects of prepositions and subjects (?) of embedded clauses:

  (i)   Uih   pian   nalan   maya' iko/kemuh
        1SG.NOM want   INTR.walk   follow 2SG.NOM/2SG.OBL
        'I'd like to walk with you'

  (ii)   Uih   merepet   kemu/iko   tudo   mio
        1SG.NOM intr-hope   2SG.OBL/2SG.NOM   stay   long
        'I hope you will stay for a long time'

[4] Two NOM pronouns in a row is disfavoured.

b. **Undergoer Voice**

Pipag *delai dih* **ki=Yudan/** **i=Yudan** **/Yudan**
UV.PFV.slap man DEM OBL=Yudan NOM=Yudan Yudan
'The man slapped Yudan.'

❖ However, the cases are not entirely interchangeable, since OBL forms can never be
used for actors:

(14)   *Lun Bawang (Ba' Kelalan)*
a. **Actor Voice**
*Keneh nemepag *anak ineh*
OBL.3SG AV.PFV.slap child DEM
For: 'He [the man] slapped the child.'

b. **Undergoer Voice**
*Pipag *keneh* **anak dih**
UV.PFV.slap OBL.3SG child DEM
For: 'He [the man] slapped the child.'

c. ***anak dih** pipag *keneh*
child DEM UV.PFV.slap 3SG.OBL
For: 'He [the man] slapped the child'

❖ Thus, case-marking in Lun Bawang (Ba' Kelalan) differs from both Lundayeh and
Kelabit and does not seem to reflect grammatical function (at least assuming the
functions in Table 1)

Table 4. Case-marking in (Ba' Kelalan) Lun Bawang

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

❖ We can therefore ask what motivates the differential use of case in Lun Bawang?

4. Differential Marking Cross-linguistically

❖ To address the question of what motivates differential marking in Lun Bawang it is
worth exploring the function of case-marking cross-linguistically.
❖ As Dalrymple and Nikolaeva (2011: 140) discuss, differential marking can indicate
different grammatical functions (OBJ vs OBJθ). However, different cases may also be
used when there is no change in grammatical function.
❖ This is known to correlate with semantic and information structure factors across the
world's languages:

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> ➤ In some languages, differential marking is related to animacy, referentiality and definiteness (Aissen 2003, Bossong 1985, De Swart 2007)
> ➤ In some languages, differential marking is related to properties of event semantics, e.g. volitionality, control, affectedness (Naess 2004)
> ➤ In some languages, differential marking is related to topicality (Iemmolo 2010, Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011)

(15)   *Hindi*
   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   uTaaya
      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' (Mohanan 1990: 104)

(16)   *Hindi*

   a. **Actor (volitional or non-volitional)**   b. **Volitional Actor**

      Vah   cillaaya   Us-ne   cillaaya
      he.NOM   shout/scream.PFV   he.ERG   shout/scream.PFV
      'He screamed'   'He shouted (deliberately)'
      (Mohanan 1990: 94)

(17)   *Tundra Nenets*

   a. **Non-topical object**

      What happened? What did a/the man do? What did a/the man kill?
      xasawa   ti-m   xada^o /*xada^{o}da
      man   reindeer-ACC kill.3SG.SUBJ kill.OBJ.3SG.SUBJ
      'A/the man killed a/the reindeer'

   b. **Topical object**

      What did a/the man do to a/the reindeer?
      xasawa   ti-m   xada^{o}da   /*xada^o
      man   reindeer-ACC kill.OBJ.3SG.SUBJ kill.3SG.SUBJ
      'A/the man killed a/the reindeer' (Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011: 128)

❖ These effects are typically motivated via the DISTINGUISHING and/or INDEXING functions of case (Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011, Witzlack-Makarevich and Seržant 2018)

❖ Nb. dative is a common source of accusative (topic) marking in languages with DOM, perhaps on account of the fact that goals are typically animate/topical (Bossong 1991, Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011)

❖ So, what determines the use of OBL vs NOM case in Lun Bawang?

5. Differential Marking in Lun Bawang

❖ I currently only have access to c. five hours of elicitation and six recorded stories/personal histories of between 1-10 minutes long. Hence, a very small corpus with only a few instances of case-marked pronouns (and next to no instances of naturally occurring/spontaneous UV constructions).

❖ Hence, this section is very provisional and remains to be explored in more detail.

❖ Nonetheless, there are some indications that the use of OBL may be linked to topicality.

❖ Firstly, the use of OBL vs NOM in AV in the recorded texts appears to correlate with animacy (which is often linked to topic-worthiness)

(18)   *Lun Bawang*
    a. **Animate 3SG undergoer (OBL)**

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

naru'	**keneh**	roo'-roo'	taga
AV.make	3SG.OBL	good-REDUP	pretty

'and so Crow decorated Argus Pheasant to make him beautiful'

    b. **Inanimate 3SG undergoer (NOM)**

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)

❖ Similarly, the following two sentences were elicited as examples of how to use the word *bifet* 'UV.PFV.hit':

(19)   *Lun Bawang*
    a. **Undergoer Voice (NOM undergoer)**

Bifet	*Badau*	**uih**
UV.PFV.hit	PN	1SG.NOM

'Badau hit me'

    b. **Undergoer Voice (OBL undergoer)**

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'

❖ The OBL form is used where the undergoer remains a topic in the following clause.

❖ Secondly, though the UV undergoer can appear initially, the OBL pronoun is not grammatical in this position (which may be associated with focus since *wh*-words appear there):

(20)   *Lun Bawang*
   a.   **Undergoer Voice – pre-verbal undergoer**
        Anak dih   pipag   *ieh*
        child   DEM   UV.PFV.slap   3SG.NOM
        'He slapped the child.'

   b.   ***Keneh**   pipag   *ieh*
        3SG.OBL   UV.PFV.slap   3SG.NOM
        For: 'He was slapped by him'

❖ Similarly, it is possible to cleft the NOM pronoun, but not the OBL pronoun. Since cleft constructions are often associated with focus, this may imply an information structure difference:

(21)   *Lun Bawang*
   a.   **NOM undergoer**
        Ieh   luk   pipag   *i=Yudan*
        3SG.NOM   REL   UV.PFV.slap   NOM=Yudan
        'He was the one Yudan slapped'

   b.   **OBL undergoer**
        ***keneh**   luk   pipag   *i=Yudan*
        3SG.OBL   REL   UV.PFV.slap   NOM=Yudan
        For: 'He was the one Yudan slapped'

   c.   **unmarked personal name**
        Bulan luk   pipag   *i=Yudan*
        Bulan REL   UV.PFV.slap   NOM=Yudan
        'Bulan is the one Yudan slapped'

   b.   **OBL personal name**
        ***ki=Bulan**   luk   pipag   *i=Yudan*
        OBL=Bulan   REL   UV.PFV.slap   NOM=Yudan
        For: 'Bulan is the one Yudan slapped'

❖ Hence, OBL undergoers are restricted to clause final position, which is associated with givenness. This can be seen from the fact that question words cannot occur here:

(22)   *Lun Bawang*

    a. **Actor Voice**

       *nemelih   bera   **irey**?

       AV.PFV.buy   rice   who

       For: 'who bought rice?'

    b. **Undergoer Voice**

       *Bilih   *delai   dih*   **anun**?

       UV.PFV.buy   man   DEM   what

       For: 'what did the man buy?'

❖ Consequently, (at the very least) it seems worth exploring the hypothesis that differential marking in Lun Bawang (Ba' Kelalan) is triggered by information structure, and that this applies to undergoers irrespective of their grammatical function.

❖ Possible historical scenario for the unusual use of OBL case for subjects:
- ➢ As in other WAn languages, OBL case is exclusively used for undergoers.
- ➢ In the more conservative dialects/languages, it marks undergoers that are topical (or topic-worthy) in AV constructions (this is obligatory for pronouns)
- ➢ This coding option is usually employed where actor voice is favoured over undergoer voice for other reasons (to signal the prominence of the actor (Latrouite 2011))
- ➢ In Apad Uat languages, the choice of UV is not determined by definite undergoers. This may result in NOM case being reanalysed from a marker of subjects/prominence/definiteness to an unmarked form and extended to other functions.
- ➢ Subsequently, OBL marking is extended as a means of indicating topical/topic-worthy UV subjects as well.

❖ Important question for future research: if the use of OBL case is linked to topical undergoers in both AV and UV, what determines the choice of voice construction?

6. Conclusion

❖ In this paper, I have presented the case marking system in the dialect of Lun Bawang spoken in Ba' Kelalan.

❖ Unlike other dialects, undergoers can be expressed using either NOM or OBL case regardless of whether they function as objects (in AV) or subjects (in UV)

❖ This is unusual for a number of reasons:
- ➢ we find the same differential case-marking patterns in both AV & UV (unusual from a WAn perspective)
- ➢ we find a differentially marked argument that is both an undergoer and a subject (a cross-linguistically less common mapping than actor subjects)
- ➢ we find constructions in which subjects appear to take OBL case, whilst objects take NOM case (assuming the mapping of undergoer to subject and actor to object from Table 1)

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- ❖ Although there is limited data to go on, it seems likely given some of the tendencies observed (and cross-linguistic comparison) that topicality may play a role in the use of OBL undergoers. This remains to be further explored.
- ❖ Nonetheless, there are important implications. Firstly, it suggests that case-marking in Lun Bawang (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).
- ❖ Moreover, it suggests that patterns of differential marking may correlate with semantic role rather than grammatical function (since differentially-marked actor subjects are often associated with focus/contrast).
- ❖ Hence, a deeper understanding of case-marking choices in Lun Bawang could 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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