

# The Diachrony of Preverbal Subject Marking across NTT\*

AFLA 28, 27 May 2021

Tamisha L. Tan (Harvard University, Nanyang Technological University)

*tamishaltan@g.harvard.edu*

## 1 Overview

- The presence of preverbal agreement and/or subject-marking is a well-known areal feature of Central/Eastern Indonesia (Blust, 1993; Klamer, 2002), and is especially prevalent across the languages on and around Timor:

(1) a. Ha'u **k-bá** nono wé á ...  
1SG 1SG-go heat.liquid water DEF  
'I went and boiled water ...'

[Fehan Tetun]  
(Van Klinken 1999: 175, ex.9.11)

b. Ho **m-kius** kau  
2SG.NOM 2SG-see 1SG.ACC  
'You see me.'

[Ro'is Amarasi]<sup>1</sup>

c. Ni **na-kaur** au  
3SG 3SG-call 1SG  
'S/he calls me.'

[Idate]  
(Purwa 1994: 102)

- The diachronic origin of these preverbal elements has remained a long-running puzzle which most scholars have approached from the perspective of WMP
  - Especial focus on languages in the Celebic and South Sulawesi sub-groups (Wolff, 1996, 2002; Himmelmann, 1996; van den Berg, 1996; Mead, 2002; Zobel, 2002; Billings & Kaufman, 2004)
- Less attention has been given to what the CMP languages of *Nusa Tenggara Timor* (NTT) can tell us.
- This talk: the languages of NTT provide key evidence for the intermediate stages involved in i) the change from Austronesian Focus → Nom-Acc alignment, and ii) the switch from postverbal agent enclitics to preverbal subject agreement prefixes as in (1)

### 1.1 Goals

- Empirically, this project:
  - Begins to address the data gap by surveying the range of subject-marking systems within the Timoric and Sumba-Flores sub-groups.
  - Distils certain patterns in the diachronic development and synchronic distribution of preverbal vs. postverbal subject markers and their relationship to alignment systems across NTT.
- Theoretically, this project:
  - Discusses the loss of Austronesian Focus in these languages as based on the mechanisms of case assignment and licensing (Legate, 2014; Erlewine et al., 2020)
  - Explores the role of agentive Serial Verb Constructions in facilitating the prosodic re-bracketing of these subject markers as preverbal.

### 1.2 Roadmap

- The PMP System
- Cross-NTT Patterns
  - Losing Focus (Mangarai and Komodo)
  - Post to Pre-verbal (Helong, Dhao, Wejewa, Uab Meto)
- Conclusion
- (Appendix: Two Genitives)

---

\*Sincere thanks go to Jonathan Bobaljik, Dan Brodtkin, Owen Edwards, Michael Erlewine, Niels T Kühlert, Tyler Lemon, and Erik Zobel for their insightful comments. All errors are my own.

<sup>1</sup>Uncited data come from the author's own fieldwork in collaboration with Sarlince Bana and Yefri Bilaut.

## 2 The Proto-Malayo-Polynesian System

- Following Blust (2013: 314, Table 5.22) and Ross (2006: 542, Table 9), the following sets of free pronouns and genitive enclitics can be securely reconstructed for PMP:

(2)	PMP Personal Pronouns			(3)	PMP Genitive Pronouns		
	SG	PL	POLITE		SG	PL	POLITE
1	*i-aku	*i-(k)ita *i-(k)ami	(INCL.) (EXCL.)	1	*=ku	*=ta *=mi	(INCL.) (EXCL.)
2	*i-kahu	*i-kamu <sup>2</sup>	*kamu-ihu	2	*=mu	∅	*=(mu)-ihu
3	*si-ia	*si-ida		3	*=ia	*=da	

- The free-standing pronouns in (2) served to introduce subjects (pivots), topics, or focused pronouns and proper names in any ‘voice.’<sup>3</sup>
- The genitive enclitics in (3) served to introduce AGENTS in non-actor focus clauses (i.e. non-pivot AGENTS) as well as possessors (cf. Appendix 1 for the separate Genitive 2 set, which adds the genitive case marker \*ni to (2)).
- This system, alongside conservative V-initial word order, is straightforwardly continued in many Formosan and Philippine languages:<sup>4</sup>

(4) D<in>alaw ko siya  
<UF.PST>.invite 1SG.GEN 3SG.NOM  
‘I visited him.’

[Tagalog]  
(Zobel 2002: 410, ex. 3)

### 2.1 The Time Depth of Proclitics

- A widely-attested set of preverbal subject-markers was identified as early as Jonker (1911) (cf. Esser 1929 and Haaksma 1933), leading Stresemann (1927) to reconstruct the following set of proclitics for ‘Proto-Ambonic’:

(5)	‘Proto-Ambon’ Proclitics			(6)	Uab Meto Syllabic Agreement		
	SG	PL			SG	PL	
1	*ku=	*ta=	(INCL.)	1	ku-/ʔu- <sup>5</sup>	ta-	(INCL.)
		*ma=	(EXCL.)			mi-	(EXCL.)
2	*mu=	*mi=		2	mu-	mi-	
3	*na=	*da=		3	na-	na-	

- These proclitics not only possess a clear relationship to the original PMP genitive enclitics in (3), but also to the modern system of agreement prefixation found in e.g. Uab Meto (6).
- There has been an on-going debate ever since as to the time depth of the innovation of proclitics in (5):
  - **Side A:** A single early shared innovation in Proto-Nuclear-MP/Early Post-PMP (Jonker, 1911; Zobel, 2002; Sirk, 1996) or Proto-Celebic (van den Berg, 1996).
  - **Side B:** Multiple parallel independent innovations in lower-level sub-groups (Wolff, 1996; Himmelmann, 1996; Mead, 2002; Billings & Kaufman, 2004; Donohue & Grimes, 2008; Blust, 2009).
- Given both formal and functional divergences across MP, I adopt the latter approach as a working hypothesis, and therefore want to explore the question: how did the CMP/Timor-specific innovation of these proclitics happen?

## 3 Cross-NTT Patterns

- The core of this project has been an empirical survey of the argument-marking functions of the descendants of the PMP genitive enclitics across eight different NTT languages.
  - Preliminary findings are summarised as follows, illustrating both the positioning and uses of these forms.

<sup>1</sup>Most MP languages come to use the 2PL *kamu* as the new 2SG, a change which had already occurred from PAN to PMP in the Genitive series.

<sup>3</sup>I will endeavour to maintain consistency by describing the Austronesian alignment system as ‘focus’ throughout this paper, and use ‘voice’ here only to distinguish between syntactico-pragmatic information structure focus-fronting from the Austronesian system. I use ‘Undergoer Focus’ to describe PATIENT-emphasising morphology in four-way focus systems and ‘Object Focus’ to describe it in two-way symmetrical systems.

<sup>4</sup>Abbreviations: AF - Actor Focus; ACC - Accusative; ART - Article; COMP - Completive; FUT - Future; GEN - Genitive; LF - Locative Focus; NOM - Nominative; PFV - Perfective; PS - Personal; PRS - Present; PRT - particle; PST - past; RED - reduplication; RES - Result; UF - Undergoer Focus

	Enclitic	Suffix	Proclitic	Prefix
PMP	Non-Pivot A, Poss	-	-	-
Manggarai	S/A, Poss	-	-	-
Komodo	S/A, Poss	-	-	-
(7) Pulau Helong	-	S <sub>Agt</sub> , Poss	-	-
Funai Helong	-	S <sub>Pat</sub> , Poss	-	S <sub>Agt</sub> /A
Dhao	P, Poss	(S <sub>Pat</sub> )	S/A	S <sub>Agt</sub> /A
Wejewa	S <sub>Pat</sub> /P, Poss	-	S <sub>Agt</sub> /A	-
Idate	Poss	-	S/A	-
Uab Meto	P	Poss	-	S/A

- Classic distinction between A and P arguments of transitive verbs, and S arguments of intransitive verbs – further divided into unergative S<sub>Agt</sub> and unaccusative S<sub>Pat</sub> subjects (Dixon, 1972, et seq.)
- To help trace the development of preverbal ‘subject’ marking, cells where the elements co-index S<sub>Agt</sub>/A arguments have been highlighted.
- From this table, we can draw the following five observations:
  - Genitive enclitics first shifted from marking **non-pivot A** to **all A** and S.<sup>6</sup>
  - As genitive markers shifted from post- to preverbal, languages began to distinguish S<sub>Agt</sub> from S<sub>Pat</sub>, resulting in rudimentary **Split-S** alignment as in Helong, Dhao (affixes), and Wejewa.
  - In all languages which overtly distinguish S<sub>Agt</sub> and S<sub>Pat</sub>, preverbal marking is used for S<sub>Agt</sub>/A arguments, while postverbal marking is preserved for S<sub>Pat</sub>/P arguments.
  - Languages like Idate, Dhao (clitics), and Uab Meto developed **Nom-Acc** alignment, distinguishing all S & A arguments from transitive P arguments.
  - Possessors and transitive patients (P) are never preverbal.
- Before exploring their theoretical implications, we will briefly look at the data that went into these observations.

### 3.1 Data

- I begin by presenting two ‘ends’ of the continuum along which languages have diverged from the PMP system.
  - The most conservative languages: Manggarai and Komodo
  - The most innovative language: Uab Meto
- We will then look at three ‘intermediate’ languages that shed light on intervening innovations: Pulau and Funai Helong, Dhao, Wejewa, (setting aside Idate).
- Note that these languages are spread across at least two sub-groups within CMP: Sumba-Flores (Manggarai, Komodo, Dhao, Wejewa) and Timoric (Uab Meto, Helong, Idate).

#### 3.1.1 Most Conservative: Manggarai (and Komodo)

- Manggarai (West Flores) retains an enclitic-only system of pronominal markers, as does the closely-related endangered language Komodo (Verheijen, 1982; Margono & I Gusti, 1987).

(8)	a.	Manggarai Pronominal Enclitics (S/A)			b.	Komodo Pronominal Enclitics (S/A)		
		SG	PL			SG	PL	
	1	=k	=t (INCL.) =km (EXCL.)		1	=hu/=ngu	=te (INCL.) ∅ (EXCL.)	
	2	=h	=m		2	=o	=te	
	3	=y/i	=s		3	=i/=e <sup>7</sup>	=si	

- These elements formally descend from the PMP genitive enclitics (with some irregular analogical influence from the free-standing pronouns) and but have extended in function.
- Instead of only marking non-pivot AGENTS, these enclitics co-index all A and S arguments (of both types) and typically occur utterance-finally (event after DP complements/PP adjuncts), as exemplified for Manggarai below:

<sup>6</sup>It is quite likely that the PMP Gen1 enclitics also marked AGENTS in Locative or Instrumental Focus constructions, but not necessarily the sole argument of an intransitive (regardless of whether it was S<sub>Agt</sub> or S<sub>Pat</sub>).

- (9) a. Aku inung wae =**k**  
1SG drink water =1SG  
'I drink water'  
[A, Manggarai]  
(Aritonang 2018: 62, ex. 32)
- b. Aku cebong=**k**  
1SG bathe =1SG  
'I bathe.'  
[S<sub>Agt</sub>, Manggarai]  
(*ibid.* 62, ex. 33)
- c. Hia pa`u eta mai bubung mbaru hitu =**i**  
3SG fall above from top.roof house DEM.DIST =3SG  
'(S)he fell down from the roof top of the house.'  
[S<sub>Pat</sub>, Manggarai]  
(Arka & Kosmas 2002: 3, ex. 3a.)

- Following Arka & Kosmas (2002), the enclitic is the real external argument, while the left-peripheral nominal is an (obligatorily definite) Topic, co-indexed with the structural subject (S/A or promoted P in a passive)
- The canonical right-edge position of these final enclitics is likely a continuation of archaic VOS word order.
- As remains the case in many Philippine languages (e.g. Tagalog), we can distinguish between a left-peripheral syntactic Topic position, and a right-peripheral Pivot position (i.e. Topic VX Pivot order)
  - I propose that these languages have a left-peripheral Topic and right-peripheral subject, with innovative reanalysis of Pivot → Subject.
- Crucially, both Manggari and Komodo show no evidence of an Austronesian-type Focus system. Instead, both have innovated typical English-type passives, with demoted AGENTS re-introduced by PP *by*-phrases

- (10) a. Latung hitu cero **l-aku** =i/\*=k  
corn DEM.DIST fry by-1SG =3SG/\*=1SG  
'The corn is (being) fried by me.'  
[Manggarai]  
(Arka & Kosmas 2002: 9, ex. 15-16b)
- b. (**\*L**)-ise onnga ata hitu  
by-3PL hit person DEM.DIST  
'They hit the person.'  
[Manggarai]  
(*ibid.* 10, ex. 19b)
- (11) a. Bentang sɔmpula **jo ata** hami  
call stupid by people 1PL.EX  
'We are called stupid by people.'  
[Komodo]  
(Verheijen 1982: 81)
- b. Hami kudu **jo ora** hami  
1PL.EX pursued by komodo.dragon 1PL.EX  
'We were pursued by a komodo dragon.'  
[Komodo]  
(*ibid.* 62)

- In these constructions, the (optional) final enclitic or free-standing pronoun can only co-index the promoted PATIENT, while the oblique AGENT cannot occur in Topic position.
- **Archaisms:** enclitic pronouns, VOS word order
- **Innovations:** enclitics mark S and A, no Austronesian Focus, English-type passive

### 3.1.2 Losing Focus

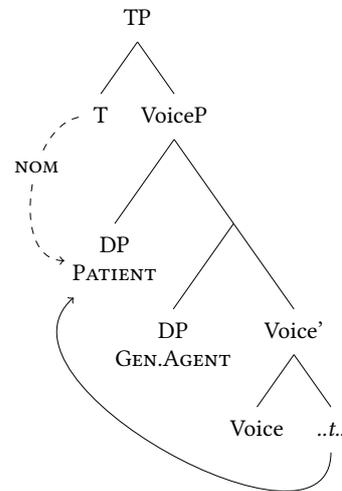
- As mentioned earlier, I propose that Manggarai and Komodo lost Austronesian Focus when clause-final pivots were reanalysed as subjects.
- Erlewine et al.'s (2020) suggest that there are two main strategies of non-pivot AGENT licensing in Austronesian:
  - \* Linear adjacency (Balinese, Toba Batak)
  - \* Last Resort insertion of a genitive case marker (Nanwang Puyuma, Tagalog, Katipul)<sup>8</sup>
- This latter strategy (13a) is likely conservative given that the non-pivot AGENT introducing function of genitive enclitics is reconstructable to PAn.

<sup>8</sup>I take this to involve late-insertion of a genitive KP above the AGENT DP, with contextual allomorphy of the pronominal D head in the presence of a genitive K to spell out e.g. 1SG =*ku* rather than *aku*.

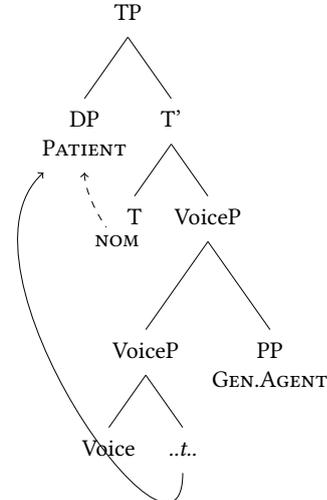
- In Manggarai and Komodo, these ‘obliquely’ marked enclitics were first reanalysed as *by*-phrases reintroducing demoted AGENT arguments, causing Object Focus constructions to be reinterpreted as (Nom-Acc) passives
  - Cf. Legate et al. (2020) on genitive nominals as PP adjuncts in Lithuanian passives and elsewhere.

$$(12) \quad V=\text{Gen}_{\text{Agt}} \text{Pivot}_{\text{Pat}} \rightarrow V=\text{Obl}_{\text{Agt}} \text{SPat}$$

(13) a. Object Focus



b. Passive



- These enclitics then lost their oblique flavour (PP → DP), becoming reinterpreted as generic AGENT enclitics in an active construction due to the recurrent thematic restriction.
    - The bleaching of Gen/Obl → Nom case and reinterpretation as an active construction went hand-in-hand.
- $$(14) \quad V=\text{Obl}_{\text{Agt}} \text{SPat} \rightarrow V=\text{SAgt} \text{OPat}$$
- Note that both Manggarai and Komodo retain a distinct set of true genitive enclitics used only for possessors.
  - In addition, both Manggarai and Komodo have elements in the A/S enclitic set that look like the PMP **nominative** pronouns – E.g. 3PL =*s(i)* rather than 3PL.POSS =*d(e)*, 2SG =*o/=h* rather than 2SG.POSS =*m(u)*.
- Manggarai and Komodo re-innovated a new English-type passive with overt oblique marker *l-/jo* ‘by’.
  - The subject argument then lost the agentive restriction, coming to mark all A and S arguments.
  - Subsequent switch from VSO/VOS → SVO word order comes from the frequently-attested reanalysis of Subjects as Topics (Aldridge, 2010; van Gelderen, 2011), already seen to have begun in Manggarai (Arka & Kosmas, 2002).

### 3.1.3 Most Innovative: Uab Meto

- Uab Meto (spoken throughout West Timor) has innovated a full prefixal subject agreement, as well as an independent set of accusative pronouns and canonical SVO word order.

(15) a. Meto Nominative Pronouns (S/A)

	SG	PL	
1	au	hit	(INCL.)
		hai	(EXCL.)
2	ho	hi	
3	(h)in	sin	

b. Meto Syllabic Agreement (S/A)

	SG	PL	
1	ku-/ʔu- <sup>9</sup>	ta-	(INCL.)
		mi-	(EXCL.)
2	mu-	mi-	
3	na-	na-	

c. Meto Accusative Pronouns (P)

	SG	PL	
1	kau	kit	(INCL.)
		kai	(EXCL.)
2	ko	ki	
3	=e	sin	

d. Meto Consonantal Agreement (S/A)

	SG	PL	
1	k-/ʔ-	t-	(INCL.)
		m-	(EXCL.)
2	m-	m-	
3	n-	n-	

<sup>9</sup>The glottal variant of the 1SG prefix is used in Miomafo and Kotos Amarasi; the velar variant is used in Ro'is Amarasi (Edwards 2020: 115).

- This agreement is obligatory on all lexical verbs, including in SVCs, for A and (both types of) S arguments:

- (16) a. Ho m-kius kau  
2SG.NOM 2SG-see 1SG.ACC  
'You see me.' [A, Ro'is Amarasi]
- b. Hai m-oenn  
1PL.EX.NOM 1PL.EX-pray  
'We pray.' [S<sub>Agt</sub>, Ro'is Amarasi]
- c. Ai' ho m-mouf?  
or 2SG.NOM 2SG-fall  
'Or did you fall?' [S<sub>Pat</sub>, Kotos Amarasi]  
(Edwards 2020: 339, ex. 125a)

- However, agreement is absent on auxiliary TAM markers like irrealis *he*, deontic *ro/lo* 'must' and epistemic (*l*)of 'maybe, possibly' receive no marking (Lemon, 2021).
- In addition, Uab Meto not only shows no sign of an Austronesian Focus system, but lacks any system of voice alternations (e.g. passive) altogether, with the exception of focus-fronting an object:

- (17) a. Oe nae au es ku-kopa  
water that 1SG.NOM FOC 1SG-spill  
'That water, I spilt it.' (for 'That water was spilt by me.') [Ro'is Amarasi]
- b. In es au k-iit =e  
3SG.NOM FOC 1SG.NOM 1SG-see =3SG.ACC  
'He is the one I saw' (for 'He was seen by me.') [Ro'is Amarasi]

- **Archaisms:** the form of nominative pronouns
- **Innovations:** S/A prefixal agreement, accusative pronouns, no Austronesian Focus.
- How do we get from a system like PMP/Manggarai/Komodo with enclitics to one like Uab Meto with prefixes?

### 3.2 The Inbetweeners

- I propose that a crucial intermediate step in the switch from post- to pre-verbal subject marking comes from languages with Split S alignment systems.

#### 3.2.1 Helong

- Consider Helong, spoken on the westernmost tip of Timor and the adjacent Semau island (Edwards, 2018). Helong comprises three dialects with low mutual intelligibility, which, notably, each differ in their agreement system.
- **Pulau Helong**, spoken on Semau island, has a purely suffixing agreement system which co-indexes only vowel-final **intentional intransitive verbs** (Balle 2017: §2.4.1.1)

- (18) a. Pulau Helong Agreement (S<sub>Agt</sub>)
- |   | SG | PL    |         |
|---|----|-------|---------|
| 1 | -ŋ | -ŋ    | (INCL.) |
|   |    | -m/-ŋ | (EXCL.) |
| 2 | ∅  | -m    |         |
| 3 | ∅  | -s    |         |
- b. Oen tilu-s sii-s lako-s tasi-s  
3PL three-3PL alone-3PL go-3PL fish-3PL  
'Only the three alone went fishing.'  
[S<sub>Agt</sub>, Pulau Helong]  
(Balle 2017: 16, 3x. 10)

- This system appears archaic in preserving the postverbal and agentive distribution of the genitive-derived subject markers, as proposed for Manggarai/Komodo prior to the loss of the S<sub>Agt</sub> restriction in (14).<sup>10</sup>
- In contrast, the more innovative **Funai Helong** (spoken on/around Kupang and in close contact with Uab Meto and Kupang Malay) has innovated prefixal agreement on **all** verbs for S<sub>Agt</sub>/A arguments.
  - This surfaces as in (19a) for V-initial verbs and either (19b) or (c) for C-initial verbs (idiosyncratically)
- However, precisely for **some arguably unaccusative intransitive verbs** like *lako* 'to go', *diu?* 'to bathe' and *nahi?* 'to fall', Funai Helong has retained suffixation of the 1SG -ŋ (Edwards, 2018)

<sup>10</sup>It is unclear however why A arguments are not similarly co-indexed by suffixation.

(19)	a.	Funai Pre-V Set ( $S_{Agt}/A$ )	b.	Funai Pre-C Set1 ( $S_{Agt}/A$ )	c.	Funai Pre-C Set2 ( $S_{Agt}/A; -S_{Pat}$ )																																				
		<table border="1"><thead><tr><th></th><th>SG</th><th>PL</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1</td><td>k-</td><td>t- (INCL.) m- (EXCL.)</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>m-</td><td>m-</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>n-</td><td>n-</td></tr></tbody></table>		SG	PL	1	k-	t- (INCL.) m- (EXCL.)	2	m-	m-	3	n-	n-		<table border="1"><thead><tr><th></th><th>SG</th><th>PL</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1</td><td>ku-</td><td>ta- (INCL.) mi- (EXCL.)</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>mu-</td><td>mi-</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>na-</td><td>na-</td></tr></tbody></table>		SG	PL	1	ku-	ta- (INCL.) mi- (EXCL.)	2	mu-	mi-	3	na-	na-		<table border="1"><thead><tr><th></th><th>SG</th><th>PL</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1</td><td>k-...(-ŋ)</td><td>∅ (INCL.) ∅ (EXCL.)</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>b-/m<sup>-11</sup></td><td>b-/m-</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>∅</td><td>∅</td></tr></tbody></table>		SG	PL	1	k-...(-ŋ)	∅ (INCL.) ∅ (EXCL.)	2	b-/m <sup>-11</sup>	b-/m-	3	∅	∅
	SG	PL																																								
1	k-	t- (INCL.) m- (EXCL.)																																								
2	m-	m-																																								
3	n-	n-																																								
	SG	PL																																								
1	ku-	ta- (INCL.) mi- (EXCL.)																																								
2	mu-	mi-																																								
3	na-	na-																																								
	SG	PL																																								
1	k-...(-ŋ)	∅ (INCL.) ∅ (EXCL.)																																								
2	b-/m <sup>-11</sup>	b-/m-																																								
3	∅	∅																																								

- This incipient Split S system seems to indicate the start of a transition from conservative postverbal  $S_{Agt}$  marking in Pulau Helong to postverbal  $S_{Pat}$  marking in Funai Helong, with  $S_{Agt}$  marking remains overt and distinct.

### 3.2.2 Dhao

- Particularly intriguing is the system found in Dhao, spoken on Ndao island to the west of Rote.
- Dhao has pronominal prefixes, suffixes, proclitics, and enclitics – all in varying distribution. Crucially, Dhao uses proclitics to introduce S/A arguments, and enclitics to introduce P arguments.

(20)	a.	Dhao Clitics ( $S/A=$ or $=P/Poss$ )	b.	<b>Ra=</b> mai heka 3PL= come no.more 'They did not come anymore.' [S, Dhao] (Balukh 2015: 107, ex. 23b)												
		<table border="1"><thead><tr><th></th><th>SG</th><th>PL</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1</td><td>ku=</td><td>ti= (INCL.) (ŋa=) (EXCL.)</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>mu=</td><td>mi=</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>na=/=ne</td><td>ra=/si=</td></tr></tbody></table>		SG	PL	1	ku=	ti= (INCL.) (ŋa=) (EXCL.)	2	mu=	mi=	3	na=/=ne	ra=/si=		c. Ja'a pa-kajape = <b>ra</b> ətu kolo aj'u 1SG CAUS-hook =3PL LOC top tree 'I hook them on the tree.' [P, Dhao] ( <i>ibid.</i> 107, ex. 26a)
	SG	PL														
1	ku=	ti= (INCL.) (ŋa=) (EXCL.)														
2	mu=	mi=														
3	na=/=ne	ra=/si=														

- This system is clearly innovative, such that these clitics appear to be bleached of their association with any particular argument type or thematic role.
- Dhao also exhibits a depreciated system of affixation.
- There are eight vowel-initial verbs which take obligatory prefixation (21a). E.g. *-are* 'take' < PMP \*ala(q) becomes *kore* 1SG 'I take' with vowel coalescence, while *-a'a* 'eat' < PMP \*kaən becomes *mi'a* 2PL 'you eat'.

(21)	a.	Dhao Prefixes ( $S_{Agt}/A$ )	b.	Dhao Suffixes ( $S_{Pat}$ )																								
		<table border="1"><thead><tr><th></th><th>SG</th><th>PL</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1</td><td>kU-</td><td>tA- (INCL.) ŋA- (EXCL.)</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>mU-</td><td>mI-</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>nA-</td><td>rA-</td></tr></tbody></table>		SG	PL	1	kU-	tA- (INCL.) ŋA- (EXCL.)	2	mU-	mI-	3	nA-	rA-		<table border="1"><thead><tr><th></th><th>SG</th><th>PL</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1</td><td>-ku</td><td>-ti (INCL.) -'a (EXCL.)</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>-mu</td><td>-mi</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>-'e</td><td>-si</td></tr></tbody></table>		SG	PL	1	-ku	-ti (INCL.) -'a (EXCL.)	2	-mu	-mi	3	-'e	-si
	SG	PL																										
1	kU-	tA- (INCL.) ŋA- (EXCL.)																										
2	mU-	mI-																										
3	nA-	rA-																										
	SG	PL																										
1	-ku	-ti (INCL.) -'a (EXCL.)																										
2	-mu	-mi																										
3	-'e	-si																										

- However, there is a single verb – *la* 'to go' < PMP \*lakaw – which takes obligatory suffixation instead (21b):

(22)	(Ja'a) la- <b>ku</b> əmu (1SG) go-1SG house 'I went home.'	[ $S_{Pat}$ , Dhao] (Balukh 2020: 90, ex. 72)
------	--	--

- I argue that this oddity is an archaic retention of earlier postverbal subject marking, preserved precisely with a highly frequent, unaccusative intransitive verb making an  $S_{Pat}$ . In addition, this exact verb 'to go' will be argued to play a crucial role in the shift from post- to preverbal marking.
- Supporting this is the fact that Dhao has canonical SVO word order, but retains VSO constructions precisely with unaccusative intransitive verbs (much like Modern Javanese and Classical Malay, cf. Poedjosoedarmo 2002; Cumming 1991)<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Dissimilation of /m/ → [b] occurs before non-nasal consonants.

<sup>12</sup>Based on Old Javanese texts from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> Centuries, Poedjosoedarmo (2002) shows that the word order of independent clauses was almost invariantly VS(O); Modern Javanese is predominantly SV(O), with passive constructions being the last to lose their V-initiality. The intermediate 500 years between these two invariant stages can be reconstructed by looking at the parallel development of closely-related Classical Malay, attested from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Cumming (1991) shows convincingly that Classical Malay had predominantly VS ordering in intransitive and passive constructions, but canonical SVO ordering in active transitive constructions.

- (23) Madhe **nəŋu**.  
die 3SG  
'He died.'

[S<sup>Pat</sup>, Dhao]  
(Balukh 2020: 207, ex. 49a)

- (Funai) Helong and Dhao both show that the languages around Timor display fossils of a system in which S<sub>Pat</sub> arguments were marked postverbally, distinct from the innovative marking of S<sub>Agt/A</sub> arguments

### 3.2.3 Wejewa

- Closely related to Dhao and also within the Sumba-Hawu family is Wejewa, spoken in the interior of Western Sumba. As in Uab Meto and Dhao, A and S<sub>Agt</sub> arguments are co-indexed by proclitics:

(24) a. Wejewa Proclitics (S<sub>Agt/A</sub>)

	SG	PL	
1	ku=	ta=	(INCL.)
		ma=	(EXCL.)
2	mu=	mi=	
3	na=	a=	

- b. Hid'da **a=** dakura =ga yow'wa  
3PL 3PL= stab =1SG.ACC 1SG  
'They stab me.'  
[A, Wejewa]  
(Kasni 2016: 101, ex. 4)

- c. Yow'wa **ku=** malle  
1SG 1SG= run  
'I run.'  
[S<sub>Agt</sub>, Wejewa]  
(*ibid.* 101, ex. 1)

- However, Wejewa appears to use the exact same set of enclitics used to introduce P arguments as it does S<sub>Pat</sub> arguments (cf. =ga in (24b))

(25) a. Wejewa Enclitics (S<sub>Pat/P</sub>)

	SG	PL	
1	=(ng)ga	=da	(INCL.)
		=ma	(EXCL.)
2	=mu	=mi	
3	=ni/-na	=nda/-ndi	

- b. Etti =**ga** oma dana ba raimale  
go 1SG garden to later late.afternoon  
'I will go to the garden later this afternoon.'  
[S<sub>Pat</sub>, Wejewa]  
(Bitu 2017: 54, ex. 5a)

- c. Yow'wa nda ammi =ki =**ngga** mana oro na mangeda pawili  
1SG NEG come =NEG =1SG.ACC yesterday because DEM a.lot work  
'I didn't come yesterday because I was busy.'  
[S<sub>Pat</sub>, Wejewa]  
(Kasni 2016: 105, ex. 14)

- Pending further work, this looks at first glance to closely parallel Split S systems found elsewhere in Central Eastern Indonesian, as with (related) Kambera, Acehnese, Selaru, and Mori Bawah (Klamer, 2008).
- Particularly notable is that Kasni (2016) also observes that these enclitics may attach to aspectual markers like durative/progressive auxiliary *ne'e* and perfective *ba*

- (26) Ne'e =**ga** pawillindi tugas hinnaanee  
DUR =1SG work assignment now  
'I am working on an assignment now.'

(Bitu 2017: 54, ex. 5c)

- I hypothesise that these auxiliaries are intransitive (unaccusative) verbs serving as the head of a SVC.
- In fact, I will now proceed to argue that SVCs precisely like these are the key bridging context allowing for the switch from postverbal to preverbal subject marking.

### 3.3 Interim Summary

- The languages surveyed are uniform in having largely lost the Austronesian Focus system, having either replaced it with an English/*di*-passive-like construction or with object fronting in active sentences.
  - One pathway to a Nom-Acc alignment was illustrated as in Manggarai and Komodo, where UF constructions were first reanalysed as passives.

- Several languages reflect archaisms with preserved postverbal subject marking, either for all *S/A* arguments (Komodo, Manggarai), *S<sub>Agnt</sub>* arguments (Pulau Helong), or *S<sub>Pat</sub>* arguments (Funai Helong, Dhao, Wejewa).

#### 4 Post-to-Preverbal

- I propose that innovation of preverbal *S<sub>(Agnt)</sub>/A* marking was fed by **Serial Verb Constructions** headed by aspectual/light verbs and, most crucially of all, the PMP verb \*lakaw ‘go’.

- Manggarai *lako*, Komodo *laho*, Helong *lako-*, Dhao *la-*, Wejewa *kako*, Uab Meto *-nao*
- This verb introduces SVCs in all the languages surveyed:

- (27) a. Kon oen **lako-s** sos mina ...  
when 3PL go-3PL buy oil  
‘While they went to buy oil ...’  
[Pulau Helong]  
(UBB 2015: Matthew 25:10)
- b. **La**-mi pare ku aj’u  
go-2PL slaughter PRT wood  
‘You go to cut wood’  
[Dhao]  
(Balukh 2020: 92, ex. 81)
- c. Yamme ma= **kako** nga’a ne kota dana.  
1PL.EX 1PL.EX= go eat DEM city LOC  
‘We go eat in the city.’  
[Wejewa]  
(Kasni 2016: 103, ex. 7)
- d. Au ’-nao ’-meo ’-aan bi Uli n-ok bi Rahel  
1SG 1SG-go 1SG-see 1SG-RES Ms. Uli 3-with Ms. Rahel  
‘I’ll go and see Uli and Rachel.’  
[Kotos Amarasi]  
(Edwards 2020: 281, ex. 204)

- If we hypothesise a system whereby SVCs took an AGENT enclitic on only the **first** verb in a series (expected under a Lowering account of encliticisation cf. Embick & Noyer 2001), this allows for:
  - Prosodic rebracketing of the enclitic → proclitic on the second verb (Stage 1 → 2 below)
  - Especially likely if ‘go’ is/was bleached of motion semantics, behaving more functionally as a future/volition auxiliary (thereby also becoming susceptible to phonological reduction, e.g. ‘I’m gonna’)
- Subsequent grammaticalisation may either reduce this proclitic to an agreement prefix required on all verbs (as in Meto, Stage 3a) or remain a proclitic but come to precede all verbs (as in Wejewa, 3b)

- (28) **Stage 1:** go=AGT V O (Pulau Helong)  
**Stage 2:** go AGT=V O (Dhao clitics)  
**Stage 3a:** (AGR)-go AGR-V O (Uab Meto)  
**Stage 3b:** AGR=go V O (Wejewa)

##### 4.1 Why ‘go’?

- Having ‘go’ as the key verb would explain several other oddities
- **Split-S** in Helong/Wejewa
  - ‘Go’ in its traditional lexical sense of motion obligates a certain degree of volitionality or agentivity – cf. ‘go get’ constructions in English (29), and SVCs with ‘go’ in Singlish (30)

- (29) a. Kate plans to go write a letter.  
b. #I will go be tall over there.  
c. #The smoke will go fill up the neighbour’s apartment. (Bjorkman 2016: 59-60)
- (30) a. She go post in chat group  
‘She went and posted in the chat group.’  
b. He go scold other people  
‘He went and scolded other people.’  
c. \*She go fall down/depart/arrive.  
d. \*The ice go break/melt. [Singlish]

- If ‘go’ primarily combines with verbs also requiring agentive subjects, the precise verbs which would be in the position to first receive proclitic marking are those which require  $S_{Agt}$  or A arguments.
- In contrast, we don’t predict unaccusative verbs to occur as the second verb in a ‘go’ SVC, resulting in their retention of postverbal  $S_{Pat}$  marking as in Wejewa and Funai Helong.
- **Fossil**: the exceptional status of ‘go’ may also explain why it is the sole verb in Dhao that retains suffixal marking.
- It is likely that this rebracketing also occurred with other aspectual/auxiliary verbs. Recall Wejewa (27) above:

(31) Ne’e =ga pawillindi tugas hinnanee  
 DUR =1SG work assignment now  
 ‘I am working on an assignment now.’ (Bitu 2017: 54, ex. 5c)

- This could explain the ‘**Low Agreement**’ in Uab Meto (Lemon, 2021), wherein TAM markers exceptionally take no agreement at all – even when they etymologically go back to verbs (e.g. irrealis *he* < PMP \*pian ‘want, desire’)

## 4.2 Existing Analyses

- This SVC account is similar to that proposed by Wolff (1996) for Western MP based on the existence of Wackernagel 2P clitics in Cebuano and Atayal:

(32) **Stage 1:** NEG=pron.GEN OV.Verb (Wackernagel Enclitic)  
**Stage 2:** NEG pron.GEN=OV.Verb (Wackernagel Proclitic)  
**Stage 3:** pron.GEN-OV.Verb (Verbal prefix)

- In many languages of Taiwan and the Philippines, these genitive enclitics obligatorily occur in clause-second position after initial elements like negation, auxiliaries, or other CP-level modifiers.
- Per Wolff, these enclitics were reanalysed as proclitic while remaining 2P, before grammaticalising into prefixes.
- However: Embick & Noyer (1999) argue that this type of ‘ditropic’ clitic in Stage 2 – which is structurally dependent in one direction but phonologically dependent in another – is predicted to be impossible

(33) a. **Phonological Parsing Constraint**  
 If a phonological word  $\omega$  contains Vocabulary Items inserted into morphemes belonging to distinct MWds, then the edges of  $\omega$  correspond to MWd-edges. (Embick & Noyer 1999: 289, ex. 54)

b. **Type 4 clitic**  
 $(_{\mu} X [Y] Z)_{\omega}$  (Klavans, 1985)

- X = structural host (requiring 2P)
- Z = phonological host
- Claimed examples of (33b) simply involve clitics which have lost the left-edge 2P requirement (Embick & Noyer, 1999; Billings, 2002; Billings & Kaufman, 2004)
- In addition, there is no evidence of this type of 2P fronting in the languages surveyed.
- An SVC analysis continues the spirit of Wolff’s (1996) proposal, since the verb will always occur immediately to the right of an auxiliary/light verb, but does not require the otherwise unattested Wackernagel 2P distribution.

## 5 Conclusion

- This paper has presented the results of a preliminary survey conducted of the argument marking systems found across several languages in the Timoric and Sumba-Flores sub-groups and distilled certain distributional trends:

	Enclitic	Suffix	Proclitic	Prefix
PMP	Non-Pivot A, Poss	-	-	-
Manggarai	S/A, Poss	-	-	-
Komodo	S/A, Poss	-	-	-
(34) Pulau Helong	-	$S_{Agt}$ , Poss	-	-
Funai Helong	-	$S_{Pat}$ , Poss	-	$S_{Agt}/A$
Dhao	P, Poss	( $S_{Pat}$ )	S/A	$S_{Agt}/A$
Wejewa	$S_{Pat}/P$ , Poss	-	$S_{Agt}/A$	-
Idate	Poss	-	S/A	-
Uab Meto	P	Poss	-	S/A

- In addition, the diachronic implications of these patterns have been discussed with respect to i) the loss of Austronesian Focus and ii) the switch from post- to preverbal marking.
- Observations:
  - **Nom-Acc:** Manggarai and Komodo lost Austronesian Focus and reanalysed genitive non-pivot AGENT enclitics → oblique demoted AGENTS in passives → active nominative S/A enclitics
  - Languages like Pulau Helong retain the thematic restriction of pronominal enclitics as agentive.
  - **Split S:** Funai Helong, Dhao (affixes), and Wejewa began to differentiate S<sub>Agt</sub>/A arguments as preverbal due to their appearance in volitional/agentive SVCs allowing for prosodic rebracketing.
  - **Agreement:** Additional grammaticalisation resulted in these proclitics becoming full agreement prefixes in languages like Uab Meto, whose ‘Low Agreement’ system reveals the key role of light verb auxiliaries in triggering rebracketing and the origin of these prefixes as external arguments in Spec, VoiceP.

## References

- Aldridge, Edith. 2010. Directionality in word order change in austronesian languages. *Continuity and Change in Grammar* 159. 169–180.
- Aritonang, Buha. 2018. Klitik klausa pasif Bahasa Manggarai Dialek Barat. *Buletin Al-Turas* 24(1). 51–67.
- Arka, I Wayan & Jeladu Kosmas. 2002. Passive without passive morphology? Evidence from Manggarai. In *The many faces of austronesian voice systems: Some new empirical studies*, Pacific Linguistics.
- Balle, Misriani. 2017. *Types of reduplication in Helong, an Austronesian language in Eastern Indonesia*. Payap University MA Thesis.
- Balukh, Jermy I. 2015. Personal pronouns of Dhao in Eastern Indonesia. *Linguistik Indonesia* 33(2). 101–120.
- Balukh, Jermy I. 2020. *A grammar of Dhao: an endangered Austronesian language in Eastern Indonesia*. Amsterdam: LOT.
- van den Berg, René. 1996. The demise of focus and the spread of conjugated verbs in sulawesi. *Pacific Linguistics. Series A. Occasional Papers* 84. 89–114.
- Billings, Loren & Daniel Kaufman. 2004. Towards a typology of Austronesian pronominal clisis. *ZAS Papers in Linguistics* 34. 15–29.
- Billings, Loren A. 2002. Phrasal clitics. *Journal of Slavic linguistics* 53–104.
- Bitu, Yuliana Sesi. 2017. Klitik Bahasa Sumba Dialek Wewewa di Kabupaten Sumba Barat Daya. *Jurnal Edukasi Sumba (JES)* 1(1).
- Bjorkman, Bronwyn M. 2016. Go get, come see. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 34(1). 53–91.
- Blust, Robert. 1993. Central and central-eastern malayo-polynesian. *Oceanic Linguistics* 241–293.
- Blust, Robert. 2009. The position of the languages of eastern indonesia: A reply to donohue and grimes. *Oceanic Linguistics* 36–77.
- Blust, Robert. 2013. *The Austronesian Languages*. Asia-Pacific Linguistics, School of Culture, History and Language, College, The Australian National University.
- Chen, Teresa M. 1987. *Verbal constructions and verbal classification in Nataoran-Amis*. Dept. of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific Studies, The Australian National University.
- Cumming, Susanna. 1991. *Functional change: The case of Malay constituent order*. Walter de Gruyter.
- Dixon, Robert Malcolm Ward. 1972. *The dyirbal language of north queensland* 9. CUP Archive.
- Donohue, Mark & Charles E Grimes. 2008. Yet more on the position of the languages of eastern Indonesia and East Timor. *Oceanic Linguistics* 114–158.
- Edwards, Owen. 2018. Preliminary report on Funai Helong. *NUSA: Linguistic studies of languages in and around Indonesia* (65). 1–27.
- Edwards, Owen. 2020. *Metathesis and unmetathesis in Amarasi*, vol. 29. Language Science Press.

- Embick, David & Rolf Noyer. 1999. Locality in post-syntactic operations. *MIT working papers in Linguistics* 34(265-317).
- Embick, David & Rolf Noyer. 2001. Movement operations after syntax. *Linguistic inquiry* 32(4). 555–595.
- Erlewine, Michael Yoshitaka, Theodore Levin & Coppe van Urk. 2020. The typology of nominal licensing in Austronesian voice system languages. In *Proceedings of AFLA 26*, 71–87.
- Esser, S.J. 1929. Nogmaals de vervoegde vormen. In *Feestbundel uitgegeven door het koninklijkbataviaasch genootschap van kunsten en wetenschappen bij gelegenheid van zijn 150 jarig bestaan 1778-1928.*, vol. 1, 161–81. Weltevreden: Kolff.
- van Gelderen, Elly. 2011. *The linguistic cycle: Language change and the language faculty*. Oxford University Press.
- Haaksma, Rémy. 1933. Inleiding tot de studie der vervoegde vormen in de indonesische talen .
- Himmelman, Nikolaus P. 1996. Person marking and grammatical relations in Sulawesi. *Papers in Austronesian Linguistics* 3. 115–136.
- Jonker, Johann Christoph Gerhard. 1911. Over de „vervoegde” werkwoords-vormen in de Maleisch-Polynesische talen. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* (1/2de Afl). 266–333.
- Kasni, Ni Wayan. 2016. Klausula keterangan dalam Bahasa Sumba Dialek Waijewa (BSDW). *Retorika: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa* 2(1). 95–109.
- Klamer, Marian. 2002. Typical features of Austronesian languages in central/eastern Indonesia. *Oceanic Linguistics* 41(2). 363–383.
- Klamer, Marian. 2008. Split S in the Indonesian area: forms, semantics, geography. *Studies in Philippine languages and cultures* 17. 98–120.
- Klavans, Judith L. 1985. The independence of syntax and phonology in cliticization. *Language* 95–120.
- Legate, Julie Anne. 2014. *Voice and v: Lessons from Acehnese*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Legate, Julie Anne, Faruk Akkuş, Milena Šereikaitė & Don Ringe. 2020. On passives of passives. *Language* 96(4). 771–818.
- Lemon, Tyler. 2021. *Low nominative agreement in Uab Meto*. Unpublished Ms.
- Margono & Made Sutjaja I Gusti. 1987. *Struktur Bahasa Komodo*. Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa.
- Mead, David. 2002. Proto-Celebic focus revisited. *The history and typology of Western Austronesian voice systems* 143–177.
- Poedjosoedarmo, Gloria R. 2002. Changes in word order and noun phrase marking from old to modern Javanese: implications for understanding developments in western Austronesian ‘focus’ systems. *The history and typology of Western Austronesian voice systems*. 311–30.
- Purwa, I Made. 1994. *Struktur Bahasa Idate*. Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
- Ross, Malcolm. 2006. Reconstructing the case-marking and personal pronoun systems of Proto-Austronesian. *Streams converging into an ocean: Festschrift in honor of Professor Paul Jen-kuei Li on his 70th birthday* 521–563.
- Sirk, Ülo. 1996. On the history of transitive verb suffixes in the languages of western indonesia. *Pacific Linguistics. Series A. Occasional Papers* 84. 191–205.
- Stresemann, Erwin. 1927. *Die Lauterscheinungen in den ambonischen Sprachen*.
- Van Klinken, Catharina Lumien. 1999. *A grammar of the fehan dialect of tetun, an austronesian language of west timo*. Pacific Linguistics, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The ....
- Verheijen, J. A. J. 1982. *Komodo : het eiland, het volk en de taal*. Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde; 96. The Hague: M. Nijhoff.
- Wolff, John U. 1996. The development of the passive verb with pronominal prefix in Western Austronesian languages. *Reconstruction, classification, description: Festschrift in honor of Isidore Dyen* 15–40.
- Wolff, John U. 2002. Final words: the development of the focus system. *The history and typology of western Austronesian voice systems* 437–449.
- Zobel, Erik. 2002. The position of Chamorro and Palauan in the Austronesian family tree: evidence from verb morphosyntax. *The history and typology of western Austronesian voice systems* 405–434.

## Appendix 1: Two Genitives

- We can also reconstruct for PMP the genitive case marker  $*ni^{13}$ , which was apparently added to the genitive enclitics in (35a) to produce a ‘doubly marked’ paradigm known as Genitive 2 (35b)

(35)	a.	PMP Genitive Pronouns Set 1			b.	PMP Genitive Pronouns Set 2				
		SG	PL	POLITE		SG	PL	POLITE		
		1	$*=ku$	$*=ta$ (INCL.) $*=mi$ (EXCL.)		1	$*=n(a)ku$	$*=nita$ (INCL.) $*=nami$ (EXCL.)		
		2	$*=mu$	$\emptyset$		2	$*=nihu$	$\emptyset$		$*=nihu$
		3	$*=ia$	$*=da$		3	$*=ni-ia$	$*=ni-da$		

- Several Formosan languages have inherited both these paradigms and specialised each to different ends (e.g. possessive nominals ‘mine’ vs. possessive determiners ‘my’ in Nataroan Amis; Chen 1987)
- Previously undiscussed in the literature is that the Eastern Indonesian languages also appear to have specialised these two sets as subject vs. possessive/object marking respectively.
- Only the non-nasal set (i.e. Set 1) ever becomes preverbal.
- E.g. in Manggarai, the nominative enclitics (S/A) are distinguished from the genitive enclitics (Poss) by voicing:

(36)	a.	Pronominal Enclitics (S/A)			b.	Genitive Enclitics (Poss)		
		SG	PL			SG	PL	
		1	$=k$	$=t$ (INCL.) $=km$ (EXCL.)		1	$=g$	$=d$ (INCL.) $=gm$ (EXCL.)
		2	$=h$	$=m$		2	$=m$	$=s$
		3	$=y/i$	$=s$		3	$=n$	$=d$

- This voicing distinction may have arisen from a now-lost nasal (cf. the OT constraint  $*NT$ , barring sequences of nasals and voiceless stops, which often leads to a voicing repair cross-linguistically)
- E.g. Komodo default S/A 1SG marker  $=hu$  and Poss 1SG marker  $ngu$ ; as well as S/A 3SG  $=i/e$  vs. Poss 3SG  $=n(e)$ .
- E.g. Pulau Helong  $S_{Agt}$  3PL  $-s$  and Poss 3PL  $-ns$ .
- E.g. Wejewa  $S_{Agt}/A$  1SG  $ku=$  and Poss 1SG  $=(ng)gu$ , as well as  $S_{Agt}/A$  1PL.IN  $ta=$  and Poss 1PL.IN  $=da$ , plus  $S_{Agt}/A$  3PL  $a=$  and Poss 3PL  $=nda$
- The existence of this independent set of ‘doubly-marked’ genitives may have lent additional support to speakers’ reanalysis of the Gen1 set as nominative.
- This is especially since the languages which show a distinct set of P enclitics/suffixes (e.g. Uab Meto and Wejewa) show greater similarities between the P and Poss markers than then P and S/A markers (i.e. retain the  $n$ -voicing.) = speakers treated all non-nominative/‘oblique’ cases similarly

<sup>13</sup>This  $*ni$  was specialised for personal nouns, in contrast to common noun alternants  $*na$  and  $*nu$ . Further decomposition into  $*n$ -GEN and aforementioned  $*i$  NOM.PS as proposed by Ross (2006) is possible but not uncontroversial given deviations in Formosan languages like Amis and Miraya Bikol (Blust 2013: 455).