Atayalic subjects and the nature of nominative

Michael Yoshitaka Erlewine (mitcho), CNRS / Nantes Université
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Handout with refs and appendices

1 Introduction

- What is a *subject*? What makes it special?
  - distinctive morphological coding (nominative case, subject agreement);
  - designated structural position;
  - its choice is correlated with choices of voice morphology (active vs passive); etc.
- Notions of *subjecthood*, and their relationship to case and voice, have been central to many debates in the analysis of the syntax of Austronesian languages.

Today: The behavior of subjects in the Atayalic languages of Taiwan (Austronesian)

(1) **A first look at voice and subjecthood in Squliq Atayal:**

a. M-aniq sehuy **qu'** Yuraw.
AV-eat taro(OBL) NOM Yuraw
'Yuraw eats taro.'

b. Niq-un na' Yuraw **qu'** sehuy.
eat-PV GEN Yuraw NOM taro
'Yuraw eats the taro.'

- Atayalic languages are descriptively VOS.
- The subject is clause-final, bears nominative case, and its choice is cross-referenced by verbal voice morphology. The subject also exhibits topichood properties and is the only argument that can be Ā-moved (relativized, *wh*-questioned, topicalized).

Details of the morphosyntax of Atayalic languages lead to a new conception of so-called **"Philippine-type" voice** and **the nature of nominative case** in such languages.

- "Nominative" is actually the absence of case;
- In each clause, we choose one nominal and **remove its case**; that is the subject. Voice morphology reflects the case that was removed.
- The basic correlation between (subject ↔ voice) ↔ (clause-final ↔ topic) is indirect.

Roadmap: §1 Background §2 Proposal §3 Nominative non-subjects §4 Conclusion

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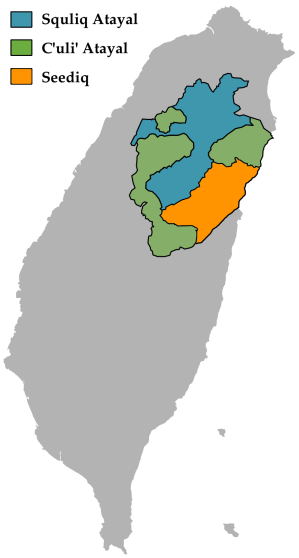
2 Background on Atayalic syntax



- The Atayalic subgroup has two member languages, Atayal and Seediq, with Atayal having two major dialects (Li 1985, Huang 1995b; cf Goderich 2020).
- They share the same overall syntax. I highlight relevant morphological differences in §2.2.
- All uncredited data come from my fieldwork with Squliq Atayal speakers from Fuhsing township in 2012.

2.1 Voice, case, and word order

Atayalic languages exemplify what has been called a "Philippine-type voice system":

(2) **Philippine-type voice systems:** (based on Erlewine, Levin & Van Urk 2017: 376)

a. A privileged argument: One argument is designated the "subject" and is realized in a particular morphological form and/or structural position.

b. Articulated voice morphology: Morphology on the verb varies with the choice of subject, including options for taking certain oblique arguments as subjects.

c. Extraction restriction: Ā-extraction is limited to the subject.

d. Marking of non-subjects: Each argument is marked consistently across all voices where it is not the subject. The form of non-subject agents often coincides with the form of possessors (i.e. genitive case).

(3) **Four-way voice alternation:** [Squliq; A. Liu 2004: 27]

a. **M**-aniq quliq **qu'** Tali'.
AV-eat fish(OBL) NOM Tali
'Tali eats fish.' Actor Voice (AV)

b. Niq-**un** na' Tali' **qu'** qulih qasa.
eat-PV GEN Tali NOM fish DIST
'Tali eats that fish.' Patient Voice (PV)

c. Niq-**an** na' Tali qulih **qu'** ngasal qasa.
eat-LV GEN Tali fish(OBL) NOM house DIST
'Tali eats fish in that house.' Locative Voice (LV)

d. **S**-qaniq na' Tali qulih **qu'** {qway / Sayun}.
CV-eat GEN Tali fish(OBL) NOM chopsticks Sayun
'Tali eats fish {with chopsticks / for Sayun}.' Circumstantial Voice (CV)

- For most bivalent verbs, AV and PV take their agent and theme as subjects, respectively.
- Non-subject agents are genitive (see 3b–d) and non-subject themes are oblique. Oblique articles on non-subject themes are generally dropped in Squliq.
- The subjects of LV and CV are generally phrases that we might describe as optional. When not the subject, locations are introduced by oblique case (4a) and instruments and beneficiaries are introduced by genitive case (4b).

(4) **Non-subject locations and instruments:** [Squliq; S. Chen 2007: 27, 61]

a. Cyux m-'abi **sa** kulu qu hozil qasa.
AUX AV-sleep OBL basin NOM dog DIST
'That dog is sleeping in a basin.'

b. Bhiy-un =maku **na** hoku qu Tali.
hit-PV =GEN.1sg GEN stick NOM Tali
'I hit Tali with a stick.'

As will become important later, non-subjects generally cannot be nominative:

(5) **Non-subject arguments (generally) cannot bear nominative case:** [Squliq]

a. Cyux m-aniq {(squ') / *__qu'__} sehuy qasa (qu') Yuraw.
AUX AV-eat OBL.D NOM taro DIST NOM Yuraw
'Yuraw is eating that taro.'

b. Cyux niq-un {na' / *__qu'__} Yuraw (qu') sehuy qasa.
AUX eat-PV GEN NOM Yuraw NOM taro DIST
'Yuraw is eating that taro.'

It will also be important that, like other Philippine-type languages (Erlewine & Levin 2021), Atayalic languages have second-position clitic pronouns for subjects and non-subject agents:

(6) **Second-position clitic pronouns:** [Squliq]

a. Niq-un **=maku** qu' qulih qani.
eat-PV =GEN.1SG NOM fish PROX
'I eat this fish.'

b. Nyux **=maku** niq-un qu' yutak qani.
AUX =GEN.1SG eat-PV NOM taro PROX
'I am eating this taro.'

c. Nyux **=saku** **=nha** kt-an.
AUX =NOM.1sg =GEN.3pl see-LV
'They see me.'

As noted above, non-pronominal subjects must be the final postverbal argument, as in (7). The only material that can follow the subject are certain clause-peripheral particles (in Appendix A) and complement clauses.

(7) **Clause-final subject requirement:** [Squliq; A. Liu 2017: 36–37]

a. M-aniq {qulih} qu' Watan {*qulih}.
AV-eat fish(OBL) NOM Watan
'Watan eats fish.'

b. Niq-an {na' Watan} qu' qulih qasa {*na' Watan}.
eat-LV GEN Watan NOM fish DIST
'Watan eats that fish.'

See further evidence of this clause-final subject requirement in Huang & Hayung 2018: 41ff, A. Liu 2017: 35–37 for Squliq Atayal and Holmer 1996: 57–58, Aldridge 2004: 33ff for Seediq.

2.2 More on prenominal articles

- The genitive and oblique articles for common nouns in Atayal each come in two forms.
- In Matu'uwal C'uli', these pairs are *na' / nku'* and *cu' / cku'*, respectively, and the choice reflects **a clear difference in definiteness** (Li 1995, Huang 1995a):[2]

(8) **Themes with oblique *cu'* vs *cku'* in Matu'uwal:** [C'uli'; Huang 1995a: 94]

a. M-aniq **cu'** qulih ku' 'ulaqi'.
AV-eat OBL fish NOM child
'The child is eating fish.'

b. M-aniq **cku'** qulih ku' 'ulaqi'.
AV-eat OBL.D fish NOM child
'The child is eating the fish.'

Consider the prenominal article inventories across different Atayal varieties in (9):

(9) **Articles for common nouns in three Atayal varieties:**

	NOM	GEN	GEN.D	OBL	OBL.D	
Squliq	qu'	na'	nqu'	sa	squ'	
Matu'uwal (C'uli')	ku'	na'	nku'	cu'	cku'	
Plngawan (C'uli')	ka'	na'	naka'	ci'	cika'	(Huang 2006)

► As noted by Ferrell (1979: 204), Liao (2004: 303), and Ross (2006: 530), **the second (definite) genitive and oblique articles appear to contain the nominative**. This is most clear in Plngawan, with the Squliq and Matu'uwal forms reflecting natural contractions thereof.

[2] Li (1995) uses the term "specificity" and Huang (1995a) uses "referentiality." I reproduce Huang's translations in (8). To my knowledge, Matu'uwal C'uli' is unique among contemporary Atayal varieties in expressing a very clear semantic contrast with each of these pairs.

In contrast, Seediq varieties exhibit a significantly reduced inventory of prenominal articles. For example, Tgdaya/Paran Seediq has only retained nominative *ka* and genitive *na*.

► However, even in Tgdaya, there is evidence that the genitive can contain the nominative:

(10) **Contrastive genitives with *na ka* in Tgdaya:** [Seediq; Holmer 1996: 128]

... laqi [$_{RC}$ napa **na ka** Temu]
child carry.PV.PFV GEN NOM Temu

'the child that Temu carried (not the one Awi carried)'

Genitive and oblique are **structurally larger than nominative**, and can properly contain it.

► What has been called "nominative" is actually **the absence of case**, in a technical sense to be made precise. (I continue to gloss these articles (e.g. *qu'/ka*) NOM below.)

2.3 Other subjecthood properties

I now illustrate two other properties associated with subjecthood in Atayalic: a subject-only restriction on Ā-movement and topic interpretation.

Movement restriction As is common for Philippine-type languages (see 2c), **only the subject can undergo Ā-movement** (*wh*-movement, relativization, left topicalization, etc.).[3]

(11) **Ex-situ agent *wh*-question ⇒ AV:** [Squliq]

a. Ima (qu') [p-hapuy sehuy qani __]?
who NOM AV.FUT-cook taro(OBL) PROX
'Who will cook these taro?'

b. *Ima (qu') [puy-un ___ (qu') sehuy]?
who NOM cook-PV NOM taro
Intended: 'Who will cook these taro?'

(12) **Ex-situ theme *wh*-question ⇒ PV:** [Squliq]

a. Nanu (qu') [wal niq-un (na') Yuraw ___]?
what NOM AUX eat-PV GEN Yuraw
'What did Yuraw eat?'

b. *Nanu (qu') [m-aniq ___ (qu') Yuraw]?
what NOM AV-eat NOM Yuraw
Intended: 'What did Yuraw eat?'

The subject-only Ā-movement restriction has been documented for various constructions in Squliq (A. Liu 2004, 2005, 2017), C'uli' (see e.g. T. Chen 2010, T.-T. Lin 2016), and Seediq (see e.g. H. Chang 1997, Tsukida 2009).

[3] Technically, as per Aldridge's (2002, 2004: 311ff, 2013) discussion of Seediq, these ex-situ *wh*-questions are pseudo-clefts: the bracketed portion is a headless relative clause, which then bears nominative case, explaining the presence of *qu'* markers. See also Paul 2001 and Potsdam 2009.

Topic status Subjects are associated with **familiar topic status** (cf Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010). V. Chen (2017: 139–140) reports the same behavior as (13–14) in Seediq.

(13) Context: What is Yuraw doing? [Squliq]

a. Cyux m-aniq sehuy (qu') Yuraw.
AUX AV-eat taro NOM Yuraw
'Yuraw is eating taro.'

b. #Cyux niq-un na Yuraw (qu') sehuy.
AUX eat-PV GEN Yuraw NOM taro
'Yuraw is eating taro.'

(14) Context: What happened to the taro? [Squliq]

a. #Cyux m-aniq sehuy qasa (qu') Y.
AUX AV-eat taro DIST NOM Y.
'Yuraw is eating that taro.'

b. Cyux niq-un na Y. (qu') sehuy qasa.
AUX eat-PV GEN Y. NOM taro DIST
'Yuraw is eating that taro.'

A. Liu (2017) demonstrates the familiar topic status of Squliq Atayal subjects using statistical measures of topichood à la Givón 1983, 1994. Subjects also disallow in-situ *wh*-words, unlike other postverbal positions (see e.g. B. Lin 2005 on Squliq, Shih 2008 on Plngawan C'uli', and H. Chang 1997, Aldridge 2004, and Tsukida 2009 on Seediq).

Summary:

- The subject in Atayalic languages is associated with various properties, which in general all correlate with one another:

  cross-referenced by voice (subject) ↔ nominative ↔ familiar topic ↔ clause-final position ↔ Ā-moveable

- Genitive and oblique articles are structurally larger than the nominative and can contain it.

3 Proposal

My proposal for Atayalic case and voice comes in three parts:

1. Case is structurally represented as K. All nominals start as **KPs**.
2. Subject promotion involves choosing one KP and **removing its K layer**. **"Nominative" is the absence of K** (see especially Bittner & Hale 1996).[4]
3. Nominals must be licensed by "being appropriately related to K or C" (Bittner & Hale 1996: 7); specifically, they must be KPs or else be in the CP domain.

⇒ Subjects lose their K heads, so must move to a clause-peripheral topic position (unless a clitic pronoun or Ā-moved).

Following much work on the syntax of Philippine-type languages, ***v*P is a phase.** See e.g. Aldridge 2004, Rackowski & Richards 2005, Erlewine, Levin & Van Urk 2020, Erlewine & Levin 2021, Erlewine & Lim 2023, Hsieh 2025.

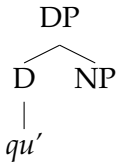
[4] See also Kornfilt & Preminger 2015, McFadden 2018, Smith et al. 2019, and Zompì 2019, as well as motivating evidence from the typology of case-marking: see e.g. Blake 2001, Caha 2009, 2024, and citations there.

3.1 Nominal types and their distribution

Atayalic nominals maximally project the projections KP > DP > NP. **The so-called nominative articles are D heads,** associated with definiteness. (There are also null K heads, for bare nouns, but there are no unpronounced D heads.)

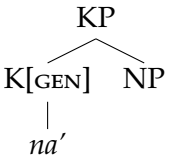
(15) **Some example nominals in Squliq Atayal:**

a. Nominative:



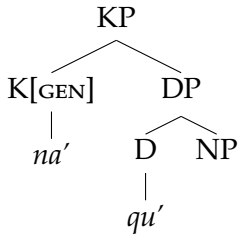
⇒ "*qu'* NP"

b. Simple genitive:



⇒ "*na'* NP"

c. Complex genitive (GEN.D):



⇒ "*nqu'* NP"

Nominals require Case/licensing (see e.g. Chomsky 1981, 1986, Chomsky & Lasnik 1993), which restricts their distribution.

- I adopt the idea that this in fact reflects two requirements: (a) K heads require Case/licensing and (b) nominals normally must be KPs (Bittner & Hale 1996, Levin 2015).
- Bittner & Hale (1996) propose a "K Filter" that ensures that nominals are "appropriately related to K or C, and rules out double Case assignment" (p. 7). I restate it as (16):[5]

(16) **K Filter:** (based on Bittner & Hale 1996: 8)

A nominal argument must be a KP or be selected by a C head, but not both.

- I adopt a split CP architecture (Rizzi 1997) for Atayalic and accordingly there will be two heads — C and Topic — that count as C heads for the purposes of the K Filter.

I assume all arguments are generated as KPs within the thematic domain (the lower phase, *v*P).

- Nominals that are core arguments of the verb are *valued* during the derivation: (17a–b).[6]
- Nominals can also be born with an *inherent* case value: (17c–d).

(17) **Four varieties of valued K:**

a.	agent	K[vGEN]
b.	theme	K[vOBL]
c.	location	K[iOBL]
d.	ben./instr.	K[iGEN]

[5] Bittner & Hale's (1996) formulation is: "An argument chain headed by a K-less nominal (DP or NP) contains a position that is c-commanded and governed by K or C, and does not contain any Case-bound position" (p. 8). The "K Filter" reflects the widespread intuition of K and C being parallels of one another across the nominal and clausal domains, as first suggested by Lamontagne & Travis (1987). Both contribute the function that Wiltschko (2011, 2014) refers to as "anchoring" or "linking."

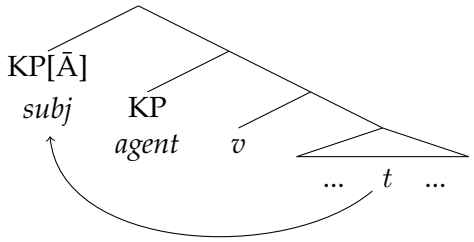
[6] My proposal here is independent of the exact mechanism for how case-value-less nominals receive case values. Practically, my proposal is compatible with V. Chen's (2017, 2025) proposal that GEN / OBL are assigned to case-value-less nominals in a nominative/accusative alignment. V. Chen (2017, 2025) presents evidence from Seediq that the oblique of themes may be described as structural accusative (extending also to ECM subjects, derived objects of raising-to-object-like predicates, and causees of productive causatives) and that the genitive of agents is structural nominative (extending to unaccusative themes).

3.2 Voice alternations via K-Removal

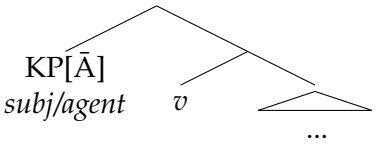
In every clause, we build the *v*P with all nominals starting as KPs. Then, *v* targets an Ā-nominal[7] for the process of "promotion to subject," in three steps:

1. **Move the subject KP to the *v*P edge**, unless already there as in (18b).

(18) a. Non-Actor Voice (NAV):



b. Actor Voice (AV):



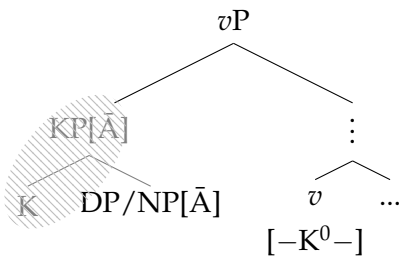
2. **Copy the subject KP's case value onto *v*,** where it realizes voice morphology. This follows the "*wh*/case-agreement" approach to Philippine-type voice; see e.g. Chung 1982, 1994, 1998, Kroeger 1990, Pearson 2001, 2005, Rackowski 2002, Rackowski & Richards 2005.[8]

(19) **Realizations of *v*:**

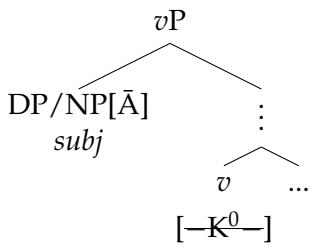
a. v[VGEN] ↔ AV
b. v[VOBL] ↔ PV
c. v[IOBL] ↔ LV
d. v[IGEN] ↔ CV

3. **Remove the K head of the subject.**[9] See Müller 2017, 2018 on *Remove*.

(20) a.



⇒ b.



3.3 Subject-final word order

Recall that nominals are subject to a licensing requirement, the K Filter (16). The subject — now K-less — must now move someplace for licensing.

► There are **only three ways** that a K-less nominal can be licensed:

i. Clitic pronouns head-move into T (§4 below) and are exempt from the K Filter.
ii. Ā-moved subjects (e.g. for relative clause pivots) move to Spec,CP.
iii. Otherwise, the subject must move to Spec,TopP, which can host one topic. **Topics are definite**, so these subjects project a D head and hence are **descriptively "nominative"** (see 15c).[10]

[7] The subject may bear a [TOP] or be a relative operator with [REL], or potentially bear an arbitrary Ā-annotation as in V. Chen 2025, Hsieh 2025.

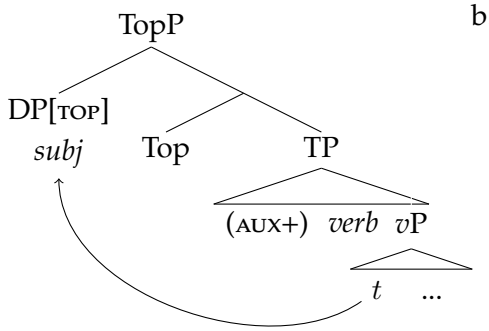
[9] The idea that subject promotion involves structure removal of case/K is suggested in an unpublished manuscript, Kroeger 1990. However, Kroeger does not address the nature of the remaining (nominative) articles on subjects. For recent, related work, see also Hewett (to appear) and Kouneli (talk on Monday in Florence).

[9] In the full paper, I also describe an alternative conception of the relationship between voice morphology and the subject's original case value — based on case-discriminating probing (Deal 2017) and CV being a default (following V. Chen 2017, 2025) — which may actually be empirically superior.

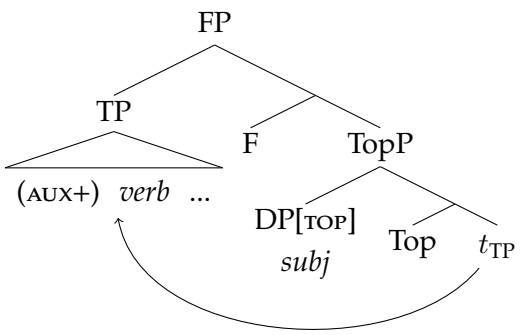
The TP fronts above the topic, leaving the topic (subject) in clause-final position (Aldridge 2002, 2004, 2013, 2019 and Holmer 2005 on Seediq and T. Chen 2010 on Matu'uwal C'uli'):

(21) **Subject movement to Spec,TopP followed by remnant TP fronting:**

a.



b.



See Appendix A for evidence of the high structural position of clause-final subjects.

Summary: I have presented a proposal for case, voice, and word order in Atayalic. The central innovation is the idea that **subject promotion involves removal of its case (K)**.

- Nominative is structurally smaller than oblique and genitive — a DP, not KP;
- The choice of subject/nominative argument correlates with voice morphology on the verb — via *wh*/case agreement (or another option; see note 9);
- The subject must move to the topic position (unless a pronoun or an Ā-target) due to the K Filter, and thus must be definite, explaining its K-less DP ("nominative") form.

4 Non-subjects with nominative marking

► Evidence for the unique aspects of my proposal comes from the **limited possibility of non-subjects with nominative marking**. This is surprising (!). Recall that in general, nominative-marking is one-to-one with the subject; see (5).

Under certain circumstances, non-subject agents can be nominative-marked instead of genitive-marked. This must be accompanied by a corresponding genitive clitic pronoun:

(22) **Nominative non-subject agents with obligatory genitive clitic pronouns:** [Squliq]

a. Nanu (qu') [cyux *(=**nya**) niq-un ___ **qu'** Yuraw]?
what NOM AUX =GEN.3sg eat-PV NOM Yuraw
'What is Yuraw eating?'

b. Wal =saku *(=**nya**) kt-an **qu'** Tali.
AUX =NOM.1sg =GEN.3sg see-LV NOM Tali
'Tali saw me.'

This construction has also been well documented in Tgdaya Seediq (Aldridge 2004) and Truku Seediq (Tsukida 2009, Oiwa-Bungard 2017).

[10] Or possibly bare, in Atayalic varieties that allow inherently-definite nominals (e.g. proper names and those with postnominal demonstratives) to not project D. See the full paper for discussion.

Proposal:

- ► Second-position clitic pronouns reflect T optionally attracting K heads for head-movement, placing the enclitic following T (which the verb moves to if there is no auxiliary).
- • Pronouns reflect nominal functional structure without an NP (Postal 1966, Elbourne 2001, 2005; a.o.). I assume genitive pronouns are [$_{KP}$ K[vGEN]+D]. Head-movement targeting this K(+D) head thus effectively moves the whole pronoun.[11]
- ► If this same process targets a genitive non-subject agent *with an NP*, we move just the K head, resulting in the genitive clitic pronoun, **stranding a K-less nominal**.
  - – Just like K-less nominals that are the result of subject promotion, the agent must then move into the CP domain to satisfy the K Filter (16).
  - – The topic position (in the split CP) would allow the K-less agent to be licensed (per the K Filter). Topics must be definite, so these would be K-less DPs. The result is **nominative (K-less DP) agents with obligatory genitive clitic doubling**.
    (See Appendix A for evidence of the high position of nominative non-subjects.)
  - – This derivational possibility only applies to non-subject agents, because agents are the only non-subjects at the *v*P phase edge (see (18a) and note 11 below).

Variation in the number of nominatives/topics:
In Squliq Atayal, nominative non-subjects of this form are not possible if the subject itself is a postverbal full noun phrase (23) — hence its limited distribution, where the subject is Ā-moved or a clitic pronoun (22a). But Seediq is not restricted in this way! See (24).

(23) **Nominative non-subject agent cannot cooccur with full NP subject:** [Squliq]

a. Niq-un na' Yuraw qu' sehuy qani.
eat-PV GEN Yuraw NOM taro PROX
'Yuraw is eating this taro.'

b. *Niq-un =nya {**qu'** Yuraw} (qu') sehuy qani {**qu'** Yuraw}.
eat-PV =GEN.3sg NOM Yuraw NOM taro PROX

(24) **Nominative non-subject agent together with nominative subject:** [Seediq]

Wada **=na** bube-un ka dangi=na **ka** Pawan-ni.
AUX =GEN.3sg hit-PV NOM friend=GEN.3sg NOM Pawan-DEF
'Pawan hit his friend.' (*'His friend hit Pawan.') (Aldridge 2004: 44–45)

[11] Nominative pronouns (not our focus here) lack a K layer (following subject promotion) so are just a lone D head, which can head-move to T. Erlewine & Levin (2021) argue that Philippine-type languages only have clitic pronouns for subjects and non-subject agents, because these are the only arguments that are at the *v*P phase edge; see (18).

- ► I propose that the Top head can host **only one specifier in Squliq Atayal**, but can host **multiple specifiers in Seediq**.
  - This is a familiar type of crosslinguistic variation (e.g. single vs multiple *wh* fronting).
  - When there are two nominative phrases in Seediq, they must be in **"subject < agent" order:** see (24). This reflects the order of specifiers at the *v*P phase edge (see (18a)), with subsequent multiple movement being order-preserving (see e.g. Richards 1997).

The Ā-extraction restriction:

Recall that Ā-movement has been described as being "subject-only" (11–12). But could it instead be that Ā-movement can only target nominative-marked/markable positions?

(25) **Non-subject agent doubled by genitive clitic cannot be Ā-extracted:** [Squliq]

a. Wal =saku =nya kt-an qu Tali. =(22b)
AUX =NOM.1sg =GEN.3sg see-LV NOM Tali
'Tali saw me.'

b. *Ima (qu) [wal =saku =nya kt-an ___]?
who NOM AUX =NOM.1sg =GEN.3sg see-LV
Intended: 'Who saw me?'

- ► **The availability of nominative-marking on non-subjects does *not* make non-subjects available for Ā-movement.** The ungrammaticality can be described as a violation of crossover,[12] given that pronominal clitics of clitic doubling behave like pronouns for the purposes of crossover (Baker & Kramer 2018).

5 Conclusion and extensions

- The description and analysis of "subjects" in Philippine-type Austronesian languages have received substantial attention in both typological and theoretical literatures.
- In most prior accounts, the special morphology of subjects is an *additional* annotation (a new case value) or *additional* structure (e.g. topic-marking that obscures case in V. Chen 2025: 1884, or "the superposition of *ang*" in Foley 2008: 42).
- ► The morphology of prenominal articles in Atayalic suggests that **"nominative" is the absence of case structure (K)**. I therefore propose that **subject promotion involves *removing* structure from the subject** (see also recent work by Müller 2017, 2018).

[12] Here is one example formulation of the crossover constraint: "In a configuration where a pronoun P and a trace T are both Ā-bound by a category C, T must c-command P" (Lasnik & Stowell 1991: 691).

I conclude with a comment on the broader typology of "Philippine-type" languages.

- ► The article inventories of many Philippine-type languages clearly show — for the linguist and learner alike — that **"nominative" is a proper subpart of the other core cases.**

(26) **A couple common noun article inventories:**

		NOM	GEN	LOC	
a.	Kapampangan:	ing	ning	king	(Baetscher 2018: 2)
b.	W. Subanon:	og	nog	sog	(Bulalang 2025: 105)

Particularly striking are languages with multiple article series, all of which suggest that the "nominatives" are contained in the others and "function to identify, or specify, or agree with, various features of their nominal complements... especially of the deictic kind" (Reid 2006: 10):

(27) **Some Philippine-type languages with multiple article series:**[13]

a. Bontok:

	NOM	GEN	OBL
definite	nan	=n nan	=s nan
recognitional	san	=n san	=s san

b. Isnag:

	NOM	GEN	LOC
definite	ya	naya	kiya
anaphoric/distal	tu	natu	kitu
indefinite		na	ki

c. Itbayat:

	NOM	GEN	OBL	LOC
proximate	i	ni	si	di
distal	o	no	so	do

d. Kimaragang:

	NOM	GEN	LOC
definite	i(t)	di(t)	sid
unique ref.	a(t)	da(t)	ad
indefinite	o(t)	do(t)	sid

e. Paiwan:

	NOM	GEN	OBL
definite	a	nua	tua
indefinite		nu	tu

f. Puyuma:

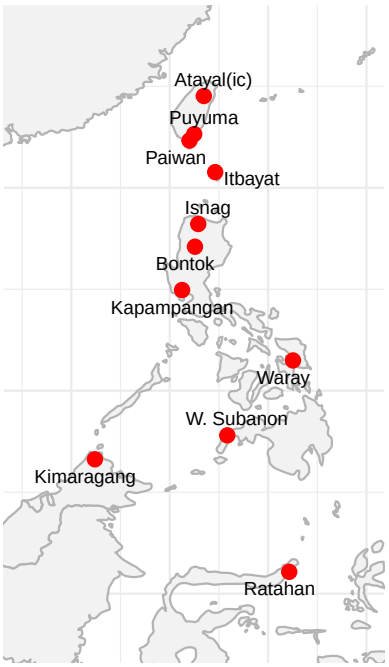
	NOM	GEN	LOC
definite	na	nina	kana
indefinite	a	za	za

g. Ratahan:

	NOM	GEN	LOC
proper	i	ni	si
common		(nu)	su

h. Waray:

	NOM	GEN
definite/non-past	'it	hit
anaphoric/past	'in	hin



- ► The recurrence of these patterns — noted in the historical/comparative Austronesian literature, but not in previous theoretical work — motivates the broader application of my proposal for Philippine-type voice systems as involving **K-Removal of the subject**.

Mhuway simu balay!
thank.AV NOM.2pl very.much

Full paper: lingbuzz.net/009463

[13] Except where explicitly noted, these articles are for singular common noun NPs. I reproduce Reid's term "recognitional" for Bontok and Kroeger's term "unique ref." for Kimaragang. Sources: Guinaang Bontok [preceding vowel-initial words]: Reid 2006: 13,16; Isnag: Barlaan 1986: 103; Itbayat: Yamada 2014: 33; Kimaragang: Kroeger 2005: 406; Paiwan [conservative forms]: Tang 2006: 177–179, A. Chang 2006: 115–116; Puyuma [Katipul and Ulivelivek dialect forms]: Teng 2009: 840; Waray: Zorc 1977: 83–85; Ratahan: Himmelmann 2002: 129.

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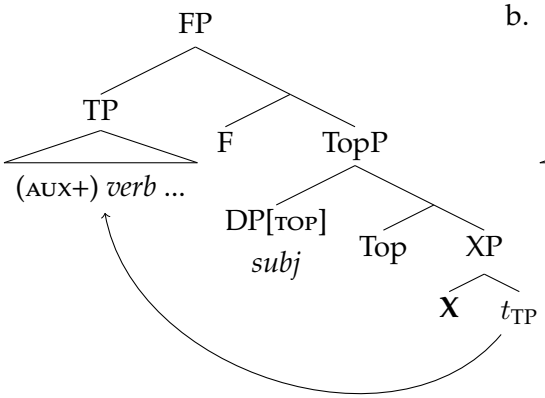
Appendix A: Evidence for the high position of clause-final nominatives

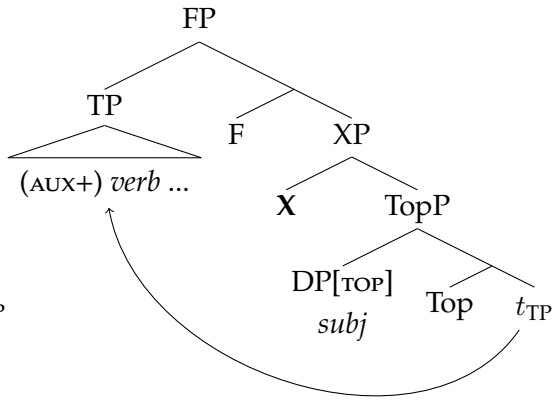
- Evidence for the predicate-fronting derivation of subject-final order as in (21) comes from **clause-peripheral particles**. As discussed by Holmer (2005), certain particles can follow the clause-final subject, or must immediately precede it. These receive a natural explanation from predicate-fronting, as X heads positioned as in (28a) or (28b):

(28) **The derivation of clause-final and pre-subject particles:**

a.



b.



The interrogative particle *ga'* in Squliq Atayal is one such example. *Ga'* can immediately precede or follow the clause-final subject, but cannot appear between the verb and other arguments — the region that I analyze as the fronted TP.

(29) **Interrogative *ga'* must be in pre-subject or sentence-final position:** [Squliq]

[TP Cyux m-aniq {***ga'***} yutak] {**ga'**} qu' Yuraw {**ga'**}?
AUX AV-eat orange(OBL) Q NOM Yuraw Q
'Is Yuraw eating oranges?'

- The distribution of the interrogative marker also provides evidence for **nominative-marked non-subject agents being in the clause-peripheral topic position**.

(30) **Interrogative *ga'* shows nominative non-subject agent is high:** [Squliq]

a. Kt-an =simu {***ga'***} na' Tali {**ga'**}?
see-LV =NOM.2pl GEN Tali Q

b. Kt-an =simu =nya {**ga'**} qu' Tali {**ga'**}?
see-LV =NOM.2pl =GEN.3sg Q NOM Tali
'Did Tali see you?'

Additional evidence comes from the unavailability of *wh*-in-situ for nominative non-subject agents, just like subjects, even though non-subject agents otherwise generally can be in-situ *wh*-phrases. See Tsukida 2009.

Appendix B: Movement properties of subject promotion

(31) **Subject promotion feeds variable binding (no WCO):** [Seediq; Wu 2024]

a. *Wada m-emux [kn-kingal laqi]$_i$ [ka bubu=daha$_i$].
AUX AV-hug RED-one child(OBL) NOM mother=GEN.3pl
'[Their$_i$ mother] hugged [every child]$_i$.'

b. Wada mex-un [na bubu=daha$_i$] [ka kn-kingal laqi]$_i$.
AUX hug-PV GEN mother=GEN.3pl NOM RED-one child(OBL)
'[Their$_i$ mother] hugged [every child]$_i$.'

(32) **Subject can reconstruct for variable binding:** [Seediq; V. Chen 2025: 184]

Gulu-un liyun [na kn-kingal bubu]$_i$ [ka laqi=daha$_i$].
love-PV very GEN RED-one mother NOM child=GEN.3pl
'[Every mother]$_i$ loves [her$_i$ child].'

(33) **Subject promotion obviates Condition C:** [Squliq; T. Chen 2014: 9]

a. M-asuq m-aniq [sehuy na Yumin$_j$] qu hiya$_{i/*j}$.
AV-finish AV-eat taro(OBL) GEN Yumin NOM 3sg
'He/she$_{i/*j}$ finished eating [Yumin$_j$'s taros].'

b. Suq-un =nya$_{i/j}$ m-aniq [qu sehuy na Yumin$_j$].
finish-PV =GEN.3sg AV-eat NOM taro(OBL) GEN Yumin
'He/she$_{i/j}$ finished eating [Yumin$_j$'s taros].'

(34) **Subject promotion feeds obligatory control:** [C'uli'; D. Liu 2011: 184; see also Kuo 2018]

a. S<um>iua' ku' nabakis ['i' ma-lahang cku' 'ulaqi' —].
<AV>like NOM old.man LNK AV-take.care.of OBL.D child PRO$_{ag}$(NOM)
'The old man likes to take care of this child.'

b. S<um>iua' ku' nabakis ['i' klahang-an nku' 'ulaqi' —].
<AV>like NOM old.man LNK take.care.of-LV GEN.D child PRO$_{th}$(NOM)
'The old man likes to be taken care of by this child.'