When the 'Majority Rule' Does Not Apply : Ergative to Accusative Drift in Austronesian Languages and How We Know

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1. Introduction

The Austronesian language family contains some 1200 languages, which are spoken in Taiwan, Southeast Asia, the Pacific and also in Madagascar. Most of the languages did not have a writing system until the 19th century, and thus to know the history of these languages, a comparison and reconstruction of the languages spoken today needs to be done. Nevertheless, the genetic relationships among the languages are relatively well-established, as shown in Figure 1. Proto-Austronesian, their commonly shared ancestral language, is considered to have been spoken in Taiwan some 5000 to 6000 years ago. This means, the time depth of the languages we are looking at is within the range where the comparative method is considered to be applicable.

It is a common practice in comparative-historical studies, where alternative reconstructions are theoretically possible, to reconstruct to their shared parent language those forms and patterns that are most widespread and are found across subgroup boundaries. This is often referred to as "the majority rule." However, the reconstruction of pronominal patterns for certain protolanguages in the Austronesian language family is best achieved when the majority rule is NOT applied. In this paper, this will be shown with data from Central-
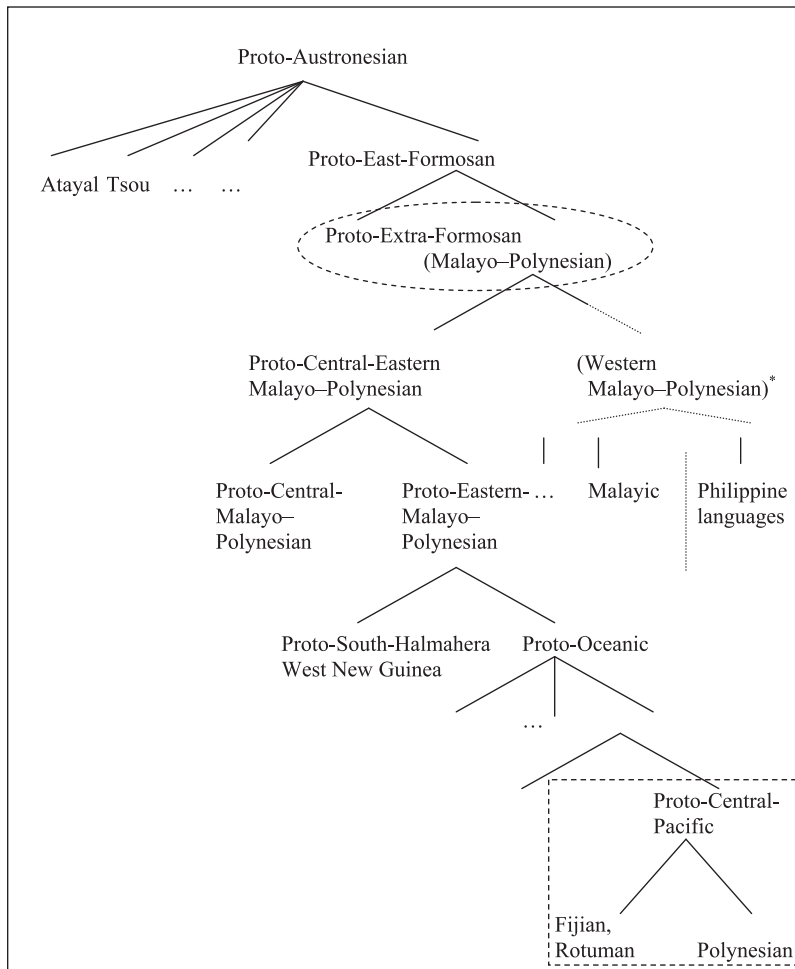
Figure 1   The Austronesian Language Family†

* 'Western Malayo-Polynesian has… been used as a convenient "catch-all" category for all M[alayo-]P[olynesian] languages which do not exhibit the innovations diagnostic of Central-Eastern Malayo Polynesian…the WMP languages are the residue that results from subtracting the CEMP languages from the MP category' (Blust 1997: 30).
† The family tree is based on Blust 1977, 1997; Reid 1982, p.c.

Pacific languages (marked with a dotted rectangle in Figure 1), the majority of which show an accusatively aligned pronominal system. In Section 2, I will present data that illustrate problems in reconstructing an accusative pronominal system for their commonly shared ancestral language, Proto-Central-Pacific. In Section 3, I will show that, by examining both lexical reconstruction of the relevant forms and their occurrence patterns, an ergatively aligned system should be reconstructed for Proto-Central-Pacific, since this best accounts for the overall situation. Questions have been raised by well-regarded comparativists regarding the proposed hypothesis, namely, whether it is realistic to assume that such massive parallel innovations from ergative to accusative could have occurred across so many languages.
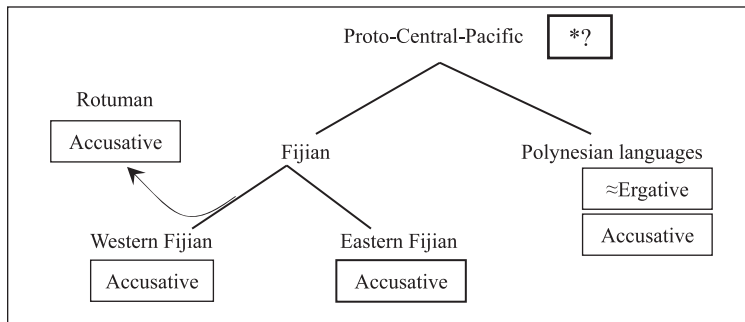
Figure 2   Patterns of Clitic-Pronoun Systems in Central-Pacific Languages

I argue that this was indeed possible, for in many Austronesian languages, the switch to an accusative pattern can be demonstrated to be the result of a simple linguistic change, one that could readily happen individually in different languages. To show this, the mechanisms, the pre-existing conditions and the motivations for such changes are discussed in Sections 4 and 5. Section 6 is a summary.

2. Problems in Reconstructing an Accusatively Aligned Pronominal System for Proto-Central-Pacific

The Central-Pacific languages constitute a lower-level subgroup of Oceanic languages that consist of Rotuman, Fijian and the Polynesian languages, most of which have been described as having an accusatively aligned pronominal system, while some Polynesian languages have been described as showing a partially ergative system. The distribution of the two patterns in this language group is show in Figure 2.

A glance at this distribution, along with the fact that the accusatively aligned patterns in this language group are in the majority, makes it appear to be reasonable to reconstruct an accusative system for their parent language, Proto-Central-Pacific. However, I have earlier demonstrated that an ergative-pattern pronominal system has to be reconstructed for Proto-Central-Pacific, based primarily on the fact that some clitic-pronoun systems occurring in an accusative pattern today show forms that are recognizable as remnants of an earlier ergative system.[1] An outline of the arguments is presented below, starting with some data.

The first set of data comes from Wayan Fijian, which is a Western Fijian language. In (1)a, an intransitive sentence, and in (1)b, a transitive sentence, the clitic pronoun *qu* indicates the first person singular "subject," indicating 'I'. In (1)c, the form *au* is used to indicate the patient "me". The contrast found here is between *qu*, expressing the S of the intransitive sentence and A of the transitive sentence, and *au*, expressing the O or P, showing an accusative pattern.

(1)   <u>Wayan Fijian</u> (Western Fijian)
          a. Intransitive ***Qu=***   *laka*   *niyavi.*
                            1SG=   go   yesterday
                            '**I** went yesterday.'   (P&S 2003: entry qu_1)

b. Transitive   *...**qu**= saa   vece=ko*
                1SG=   already   tell=2SG
                '...(that) **I** told you'   (P&S 2003: entry *dodonu*)

c. Transitive   *A=nei   vecei=**au**   o   Taina me...*
                3SG=often   tell=1SG.ACC   +PRPR Taina   that.3SG
                'Taina used to tell **me** that...'   (P&S 2003: entry *vakateke*)

The second set of data comes from Eastern Kadavu Fijian, which is slightly different from Wayan Fijian. As shown in (2)a and (2)b, the same clitic pronoun indicates the first person singular subject 'I' for both intransitive as well as transitive sentences, but the form is *au*, not *qu*. The form *au* also expresses the patient 'me' in this language, as can be seen in (2)c. Unlike in Wayan Fijian, there is no morphological contrast between subject and object clitic pronouns in Eastern Kadavu Fijian, however, there is a word-order contrast, since S and A precede the verb, while O follows the verb.

(2) Eastern Kadavu Fijian (Eastern Fijian, my fieldnotes)
     a. Intransitive ***Au**=na   laxo (oiau).*
                      1SG=future   go   (I)
                      '**I** will go (myself).'

     b. Transitive   ***Au**=na   xacivi=ixo.*
                      1SG= future call=2SG.ACC
                      '**I** will call you. '

     c. Transitive   *I=dau   xacivi=**au**   o   Mere.*
                      3SG=habit   call=1SG.ACC   +PRPR Mere
                      'Mere tends to call **me**.'

The third set is shown from Rotuman. We see a similar word-order contrast in Rotuman to the one we have just seen in Eastern Kadavu Fijian. However, while the pronominal forms we saw in Fijian were clitic pronouns, the forms in Rotuman are independent pronouns, and they alternate with non-pronominal noun phrases.

(3) Rotuman (Central Pacific, Churchward 1940)
     a. Intransitive ***Iris**   jonieris.*
                      they   run.away
                      '**They** have run away. (1940: 128)/**They** fled. (1940: 24)'

     b. Transitive   *(teraṇit ne) **iris** fạ'i   e   puku...*
                      the.day   that they   wrote   then   the.letters
                      '(the day on which) **they** wrote the letters' (1940: 123)

    c. Transitive   *Ia   al'åk   **iris**.*
                      he   kill   they
                      'He killed **them**.' (1940: 121)

    d. Intransitive **Gou**   *fea   'e   irisa.*
                      I   afraid with they
                      'I am afraid of **them**.' (1940: 34)

The three examples above all show a clearly accusative pattern. The commonly shared feature between the three languages is a position contrast, which can be displayed in structures as shown in (4). However, the relevant pronouns in Wayan Fijian are clitic pronouns and show a morphological contrast, while those in Eastern Kadavu Fijian show only the position contrast. Those in Rotuman, unlike those in the Fijian languages, are independent pronouns.

(4)   <u>Proto-Central Pacific?</u>
     a. Intransitive **Npron**   **V**
                    S   -TRNS

     b. Transitive **Npron**   **V**   **Npron**
                    A   +TRNS   O

It has been shown that the above positions for (clitic) pronouns referring to S, A and O are reconstructible as an earlier system (Kikusawa 2002). However, when we try to reconstruct the pronominal forms that must have occurred in these slots assuming that they were accusatively aligned, problems occur. The most serious of these is that there is no single set of pronouns lexically reconstructible for the supposed nominative set expressing S and A (Figure 3). In other words, the reconstruction of an accusative pattern cannot be supported by any reasonable reconstruction of nominative clitic pronouns.

In Fijian languages, for example, we find the two forms *au* and *qu* [ŋgu] indicating 1sɢ S and A as shown in Table 1, and these forms are reconstructed for Eastern and Western
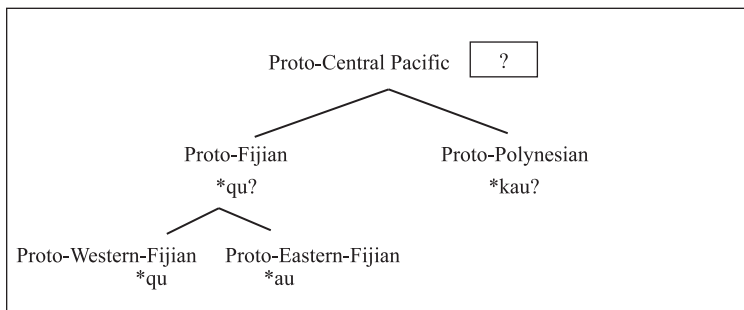

Figure 3   An Example of Problematic Reconstruction of Pronominal Forms in Central
               Pacific languages (with 1sɢ Forms)

Fijian respectively. However for Proto-Fijian, Pawley and Sayaba (1971: 419–420), forced to choose one out of the two, reconstructed *qu, with a note saying that this is a "tentative" reconstruction.

Table 1   1sG Verb-agreement Forms Indicating S and A in Various Fijian Languages

Language	W or E Fijian	Form
Standard Fijian (K)	E	*au*
Wailevu, Kadavu (K)	E?	*au*
Lau (G77)	E	*(k)au*
Waidina (G83, 77)	E (–W)	*qu*
Nadrau (K)	E	*au*
Tokaimalo (G83: 211)	W (–E)	*au*
Nabukelevu (K)	W?	*=qu, qu=*
Wayan (PS)	W	*qu*
Batiwai (K)	W	*qu*
Tubai (G83: 211)	W	*qu*
Nakoroboya (G83: 252)	W	*qu*
Tubaniwai (G83: 284)	W	*qu*

/q/ indicates prenasalized velar stop. Sources: G83 = Geraghty (1983); G77 = Geraghty (1977);
PS = Pawley and Sayaba (2003); K = my fieldnotes.

A similar problem is found in data from Polynesian languages (Table 2). Pawley (1970) reconstructed the form *kau, however there are many forms left unaccounted for, and it is not clear why Pawley chose this form. Probably, because it is the form that appears in the majority of the languages. Geraghty, on the other hand trying to account for all the forms, reconstructed the form as *(kq)a('')u. The parentheses probably represent possible alternative reconstructions, so the form would be pronounceable, depending on whether *k* or *q* was the correct sound.

Table 2   1sG Clitic/verb-agreement Forms in Polynesian Languages

Language	Form
Tongan	*u, ku, kau, oku, ou*
Samoan	*ʔou, oʔu*
Nanumea Ellice	*kau*
East Futunan	*kau*
East Uvean	*u, au*
West Uvean	*gu*
Mae	*ku*
Tokelauan	*ko*

Reconstructed 1sG form for Proto-Polynesian: *kau (Pawley 1970);
reconstructed 1sG form for Proto-Tokalau-Fijian Polynesian:
*(kq)a('')u (Geraghty 1983: 377)

These imply that either the assumed pattern or the lexical reconstruction, or both are wrong, and the question here is how one should proceed from here. In the next section, an outline of the approach that was used to clarify the historical development of the pronominal systems in the Central Pacific languages is presented.

3. A Pattern Change in Clitic Pronouns: A Reconstruction

The claim made here is that assuming an ergatively aligned pattern for the pronominal system in Proto-Central-Pacific best accounts for the situation described in the previous section, and thus is considered to be the most reasonable reconstruction. The following are the procedural steps that were followed to reach this conclusion.

1) Examine possible lexical sources of the relevant pronominal forms, by looking for possible cognates outside of the Central-Pacific language group, to determine their original syntactic function, that is their pattern of occurrence.

2) Based on 1), establish a hypothesis as to what kind of pattern the pronominal forms must have had in the parent languages of the Central-Pacific languages.

3) Examine if there is enough internal evidence to support the hypothesis established in 2).

It should be noted that here that bottom-up lexical reconstruction of relevant forms and an internal pattern comparison must precede Step 1) above, as has been demonstrated in Section 2.

3.1 Hypothesis Established Based on External Evidence

Proto-Extra-Formosan (PEF, corresponding roughly to Proto-Malayo-Polynesian in some literature), is shown with a dotted circle in Figure 1. It is one of the distant parent languages of the Central-Pacific subgroup. Two sets of pronouns have been reconstructed for PEF, namely, a genitive set (functioning as ergative when occurring on the verb) and a nominative set (functioning as absolutive).[2] Similarly, two sets have been reconstructed for Pre-Proto-Oceanic, a daughter language of Proto-Extra-Formosan and a parent of Proto-Central-Pacific. The reconstructed singular forms are shown in Table 3, along with the information about the corresponding forms that occur in current Central-Pacific languages.

Table 3 Previously Reconstructed Singular Clitic Pronouns

	1sg		2sg		3sg	
	GEN	NOM	GEN	NOM	GEN	NOM
Proto-Extra-Formosan (Blust 1977, LRC 2002)	*(n)i-ku *=ku	*=aku	*=mu	*i-kaSu *=kaw	*=(y)a, *=ña	*si-ia *=ya
Pre-Proto-Oceanic (LRC 2002: 14)	*ku=	*au	*=mu	*=ko	*=(y)a, =ña	*=i
Proto-Oceanic (LRC 2002)	*=ŋku, *=au		*=mu, *=koe		*=ña, *Ø, *=a	
Forms occurring in current Fijian languages	*qu* or *au* (V) =*qu* (N)		(*i*)*ko* (V) =*mu* (N)		Ø, *i/e* (V) =*na* (N)	
Form occurring in current Polynesian languages	The reflex of either *kau/ou, or *au/o				The reflex of either *na or *Ø	

Notes: The Proto-Extra-Formosan forms (are adapted from Blust (1977) which labels them Proto-Malayo-Polynesian. The bottom line follows LRC (2002). Pre-Proto-Oceanic pronominal forms follow LRC (2002: 14).

The forms in current Fijian are either proclitic or enclitic depending on the person number and also the dialect. Those followed by (V) and (N) are the forms that occur on the verb and the noun respectively.

The 3sg form =*na* occurs on the verb in some Polynesian languages, such as Samoan.

The reconstruction proposed in LRC (2002: 14) is apparently based on the fact that the pronominal systems of most Oceanic languages today show an accusative pattern, and assumes a single set (occurring on the verb) for Proto-Oceanic, which the authors call "subject proclitics." This forced them to assume that the earlier genitive and nominative distinction had been lost by the stage of Proto-Oceanic. To account for this, they present "Pre-Proto-Oceanic" forms, as cited in Table 3, although the status of this simply means a stage before Proto-Oceanic. As for the status of the two pronominal sets at the stage of Proto-Oceanic, they simply mention that "it [=the functional distinction between the two sets] was being lost when Proto-Oceanic broke up." The forms that are found in Central-Pacific languages today, which are listed in the bottom two lines in Table 3, are reflexes of either the earlier genitive (ergative) form, or the earlier nominative (absolutive) form. Table 4 presents a revised reconstruction of singular clitic pronouns which claims that Proto-Oceanic maintained a distinction between genitive and nominative clitic pronouns and that these were maintained as such in Proto-Central Pacific.

Table 4   Revised Reconstruction of Singular Pronominal Forms

	1SG		2SG		3SG	
	GEN	NOM	GEN	NOM	GEN	NOM
Proto-Extra-Formosan	*(n)i-ku *=ku	*=aku	*=mu	*i-kaSu *=kaw	*=(y)a *=ña	*si-ia *=ya
Proto-Oceanic	*=ku	*=au	*=mu	*=ko	*=(y)a *=ña	*=i
Proto-Central-Pacific	*=ŋku	*=au	(?) *=mu	*=koe	*=ña	*Ø, *=a

If this reconstruction is correct, then the two forms, *qu* and *au*, that were illustrated in the Fijian examples above, turn out to be regular reflexes. Assuming that there were two different sets as the sources of the nominative clitic pronouns currently found in Central-Pacific languages provides an explanation as to why a single form is not reconstructible. Supporting evidence for the hypothesis that the genitive and nominative morphological contrast still existed in the clitic pronoun systems in Proto-Central Pacific is found in various languages in different ways, as discussed in Kikusawa 2002 and 2003b. For example, the occurrence pattern of clitic pronouns in Samoan, a Polynesian language, supports both the existence of an independent genitive pronoun set and that a pronoun from this set was used to express the A of transitive sentences. In Tuvaluan, also Polynesian, the occurrence of the clitic pronouns expressing the agent are formally retentions from the earlier genitive set. What is more, they always co-occur with the verb ending -*Cia*, which is widely recognized as having developed from an earlier transitive suffix. The existence of the association between formal reflexes of the earlier genitive pronouns with the syntactic function of expressing the A of transitive in separate languages, such as these, can be possible only if the function of the genitive form expressing the A of transitive existed in their commonly shared parent language. If the forms had already merged (to mark "subject") in the parent language, it would have

to be assumed that the marking of A (the ergative pattern system) developed independently after the languages split, and it is highly unlikely that all the languages would have picked the reflexes of the same earlier set exclusively for this function by chance.

If this hypothesis is correct, the pronominal system, combined with the sentence structures that I have reconstructed and published elsewhere (Kikusawa 2002), would look as shown in (5), where the nominative forms express the S of the intransitive sentence and O of transitive, and the genitive form expresses the A of the transitive sentence.

(5) The Reconstructed Proto-Central-Pacific Pronoun System (Kikusawa 2002)

Intransitive 1	(V=)	Nx		V	
	AUX	NOM		-TRNS	
		<actor/ undergoer>			
Intransitive 2	(V=)	Nx	V	P N	
	AUX	NOM	-TRNS	LOC	
		<actor>		<undergoer>	
Transitive	(V=)	Ny	V	Nx	
	AUX	GEN	+TRNS	NOM	
		<actor>		<undergoer>	

4. Mechanisms of Ergative to Accusative Change

If, in fact, Proto-Central Pacific had an ergatively aligned clitic pronominal system, we are forced to the conclusion that all the languages that are daughters of Proto-Oceanic and which display a nominatively aligned clitic pronominal system are the result of language drift. The question that is inevitably raised in this context is whether such a massive drift to produce convergent systems can reasonably be expected. In this section, I will discuss the mechanisms which I claim brought this about. I will show that it is the result of a very simple and common linguistic change, that is, the merger of two pronominal sets.

The ergative-system reconstructed for Proto-Central-Pacific (presented in (5)) with reconstructed first person singular pronominal forms is shown in (6). The pronominal forms morphologically show an ergative pattern, with the form *ŋku indicating A and *au indicating S and O. What can be also seen in the figure is that in addition to the morphological contrast between the nominative and genitive sets, a contrast also occurs in the relative *positions* of A, S and O with reference to the verb. S and A occurred in the pre-main verb position (marked with a dotted box in (6)), while O occurred in the post- main verb position (marked with a dotted circle). In terms of forms we are looking at an ergative system, but in terms of position, we are looking at an accusative system.

(6) Proto-Central-Pacific Sentence Structures with Reconstructed First Person Singular
     Pronominal Forms

Intransitive 1	*(V=)	*au*	V	
	AUX	NOM	-TRNS	

Intransitive 2	*(V=)	*au*	V	(P N)
	AUX	NOM	-TRNS	(LOC)

Transitive	*(V=)	*ŋku*	V	*au*
	AUX	GEN	+TRNS	NOM

Suppose that one of the two pronominal forms occurring in the dotted box was generalized to occur in all positions. It could be either *ŋku or *au, but once this occurs, the language changes to an accusative system. Or rather, the distribution of the pronominal forms is analyzed as showing an accusative pattern. This is illustrated in Figure 2, where the two new systems are shown as "Accusative System A" and "Accusative System B." If it was the genitive form *ŋku that was generalized, the language would show Accusative System A, while if it was the nominative form *au, the language would show Accusative System B. The former now morphologically shows an accusative pattern. The latter has lost morphological contrast among the pronominal forms, and the actancy system, by definition, would be judged now by the word order contrast, which shows an accusative pattern. And this is precisely what happened in the history of Fijian languages (Kikusawa 2002). Fijian languages are considered to form two major groups, namely, Western Fijian languages and Eastern Fijian languages (Geraghty 1983, Pawley and Sayaba 1971). Some pronominal forms occurring in Western Fijian languages imply that the earlier genitive set was retained to indicate S and A, while those in Eastern Fijian languages indicate that it was the earlier nominative set that was
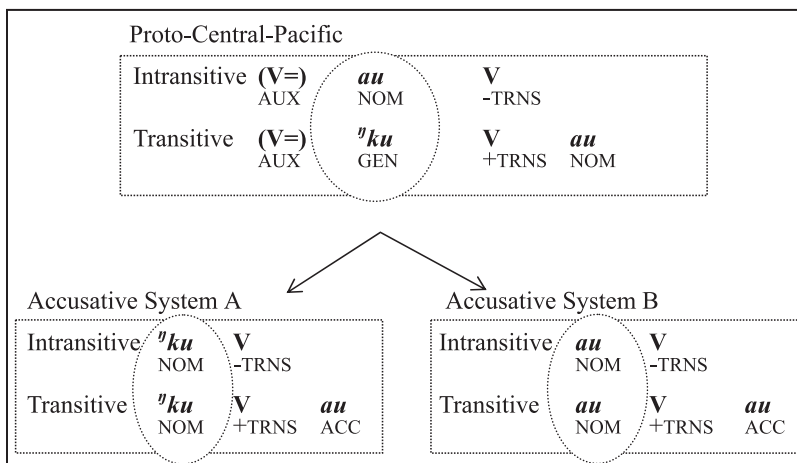
Figure 4   Development of Accusative-pattern Pronominal Systems from an Ergative Pattern System

retained to be generalized.

The proposed change is not totally unexpected when the following facts are considered. First, the two pronouns even though from two morphologically different sets shared a common semantic property, namely "actor." What is more, they occurred in the same position in relation to the main verb, contrasting with the other pronominal position with also a contrasting semantic property, "undergoer." It is not surprising therefore that two forms occurring in these positions were reanalyzed as belonging to the same category, resulting in the merger of the two pronominal sets.[3] What I would like to emphasize here is that the change itself is a reasonably simple change with rather clear motivations, where one of the two clitic pronoun sets that occurred preceding the verb was generalized, replacing the other set. However, because of the way we typically define such systems, the earlier system and the new system need to be labeled differently; namely, the earlier system is called ergative, while the new system is called accusative.

The mechanism of the change that took place in the Fijian languages illustrated above can be shown to have taken place in other Austronesian languages that also underwent the change from an ergative- to an accusative-pattern system, by comparing pronominal forms found in such languages today. The choice between the earlier Genitive and Nominative sets varies and cannot be associated with any higher order protolanguage, while when either of the forms is associated exclusively with the A of transitive sentences, the form is always the reflex of the earlier genitive set, as mentioned in Section 3. Existing systems with pronominal forms showing an accusative pattern then, can only be the result of independent parallel innovations.

5. "Drift" and Pre-existing Conditions

5.1 Problems

The proposed Proto-Oceanic and Proto-Central Pacific systems not only provide appropriate lexical reconstructions of the pronominal forms, but also the grammatical functions that the forms carried. The reconstructions also allow for an adequate account of the structural changes that must have taken place across a wide selection of daughter languages that show different systems. However, this raises questions regarding the over-all development that took place in pronominal systems in the Austronesian language family. Getting back to the family tree of the Austronesian languages, shown in Figure 5 with the distribution of ergative- and accusative-pattern pronominal systems marked, Proto-Extra-Formosan is one of the higher-order protolanguages, while Proto-Central-Pacific is one of the lower-order protolanguages.

That the Proto-Extra-Formosan ergative-pattern system was retained until Proto-Central-Pacific implies that all the protolanguages that existed between these two protolanguages, including also Proto-Oceanic, also exhibited the same ergative-pattern, as indicated with an arrow in Figure 5. However, in the Austronesian language family today we find a large number of languages that show an accusative-pattern system, such as in Wayan and Eastern Kadavu Fijian and Rotuman that are illustrated in (1)–(3).[4] The hypothesis, then, that the ergative-pattern pronominal system in Proto-Extra-Formosan was retained until Proto-Central-Pacific appears to be problematic. If all the protolanguages had an ergative-pattern
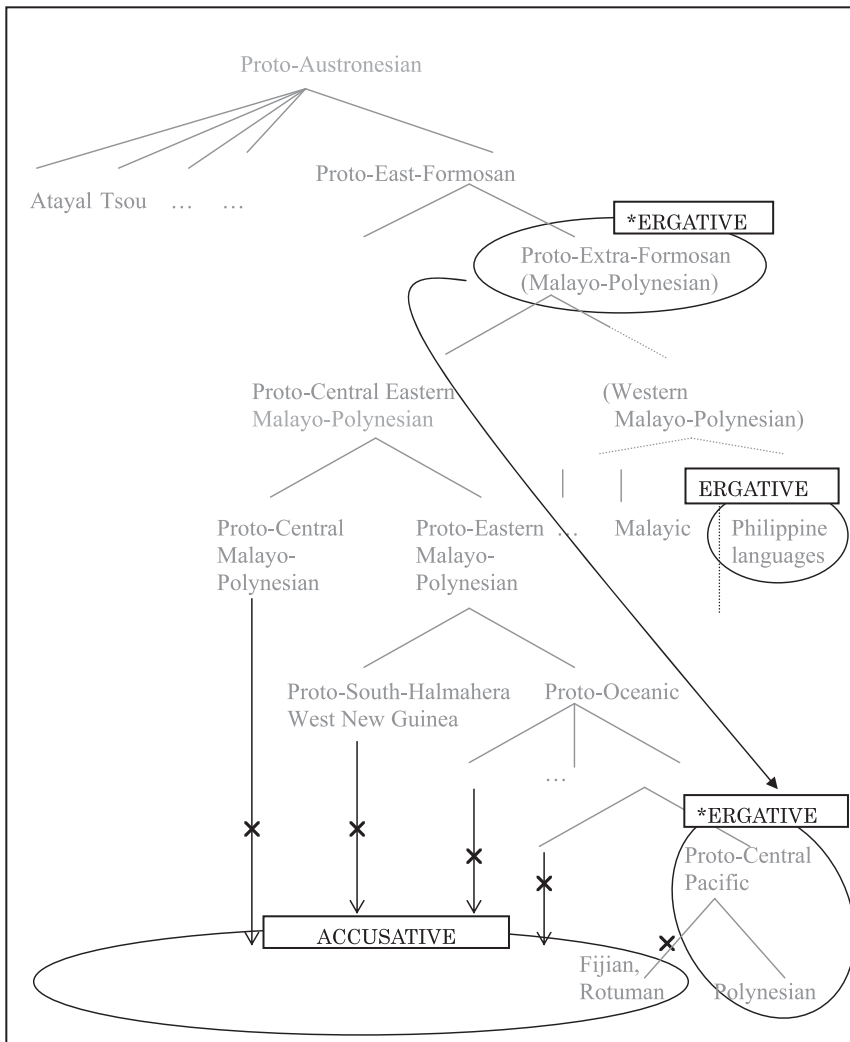
Figure 5 The Alignment of Pronominal Systems in Austronesian Languages

pronominal system and the majority of their daughter languages show an accusative-pattern today, independent parallel innovations from ergative to accusative in all the subgroups needs to be assumed. The places where such innovations would have had to have taken place are indicated with the symbol "✗" in Figure 5.[5), 6)] The question here is whether it was possible that such massive parallel innovations could have taken place, and if so, what the explanations are.

I claim that the change from an ergative-pattern system to a variety of accusative-pattern systems was in fact the result of independent parallel innovations, rather than a single change that took place in their commonly shared parent language. It has been shown in Section 4 that the change that brought about the re-analysis of the actancy system was a simple one, namely,

the merger of two pronominal sets occurring in the pre-main verb position. A comparison and examination of the reconstructed Proto-Extra-Formosan system and the situation found in its daughter languages suggests that a change took place which restricted the positions in which clitic pronouns could occur. The preverbal position was restricted to pronominal clitics that marked S and A while the post-verbal position was restricted for those that marked O, creating a structurally significant position contrast. Both the earlier morphology-marked contrast (showing an ergative-pattern) and the new position-based contrast (showing an accusative pattern) were carried over as the languages spread into the Pacific, with the morphological contrast gradually being lost. This resulted in the proliferation of accusative systems found today, with the new word-order marking overriding the morphological marking, and the new morphological marking, if any, developing into an accusatively aligned system.

5.2 Pre-existing Conditions for the Proposed Drift

When we compare the Proto-Central-Pacific system shown in (5) and the reconstructed Proto-Extra-Formosan system shown in (7), it can be seen that the former is a partial retention of the latter. One of the major differences between the two systems is the position of the pronominal forms depending on the existence or non-existence of an auxiliary verb in the sentence. In Proto-Extra-Formosan, the pronominal forms occurred as enclitics on the sentence initial verb, that is, a (sentence initial) auxiliary verb when there was one, and when there was no auxiliary verb, on the main verb. In Proto-Central-Pacific, in contrast, the pronominal forms occurred preceding the main verb.

(7) The Reconstructed Proto-Extra-Formosan Pronoun System (Starosta, Pawley and Reid 1981, Reid pers. comm.)

   a. Sentence Structures with an Auxiliary Verb

Intransitive 1 ("AF")	**V**	**=Nx**	**V**		
	AUX	=NOM	-TRNS		
		\<actor/ undergoer>			
Intransitive 2 ("AF")	**V**	**=Nx**	**V**	**Prep**	**N**
	AUX	=NOM	-TRNS	LOC	
		\<actor>		\<undergoer>	
Transitive ("GF/LF/IF/BF")	**V**	**=Ny**	**V**	**Nx**[7]	
	AUX	=GEN	+TRNS	NOM	
		\<actor>		\<undergoer>	

b. Sentence Structures with No Auxiliary Verb

Intransitive 1 ("AF")	V -TRNS	=NX =NOM <actor/undergoer>		
Intransitive 2 ("AF")	V -TRNS	**=Nx** =NOM <actor>	**Prep** LOC	**N** <undergoer>
Transitive ("GF/LF/IF/BF")	V +TRNS	**=NY** =GEN <actor>	**Nx** NOM <undergoer>	

In Proto-Extra-Formosan, a clitic pronoun expressing S and A is considered to have appeared following the clause initial verb. This means, when there was an auxiliary verb in the clause, the clitic pronoun appeared following the auxiliary verb, as shown in (7)a, while when there was no auxiliary verb in the clause, a clitic pronoun appeared following the main verb as in (7)b, which was the sentence initial verb.

This reconstructed Proto-Extra-Formosan system is commonly reflected in the Philippine languages today. Example sentences are provided in (8) and (9) from Bontok, which is spoken in the Northern Philippines. In (8), it can be seen that the nominative pronoun =*ka* (in intransitive sentences) and the genitive pronoun =*m* (in transitive sentences) are both cliticized to the sentence initial auxiliary verb. In sentences without an auxiliary verb, as in (9), on the other hand, the forms =*ka* and =*m* follow the main verb and are cliticized to it. Thus, if we focus on the relative position of the clitic pronouns to the main verb, the pronoun expressing S and A could occur preceding the main verb, and also following the main verb in Proto-Extra-Formosan.

(8) Khinina-ang Bontok (Central Cordilleran, Philippines) (Reid pers. comm.)
    a. Intransitive *'adí=**ka**   nalagsak.*
                    NEG=2SG.NOM happy
                    'You are not happy.'
    b. Intransitive *'adí=**ka**   'umala=s   nan sana 'an   siya.*
                    NEG=2SG.NOM get   =OBL the that LOC   him
                      <actor>   <undergoer>
                    'Don't get any of that from him.'
    c. Transitive   *'adi=**m**   patungan   nan   lamisa'an.*
                    NEG=2SG.GEN sit.on   the   table
                      <actor>   <undergoer>
                    'Don't sit on the table.'
    d. Transitive   *'esa=**m**   'ilaku nan mangga.*
                    FUT=2SG.GEN sell   the mango
                      <actor>   <undergoer>
                    'You'll sell the mangoes.'

(9) Khinina-ang Bontok (Central Cordilleran, Philippines) (Reid pers.comm.)

    a. Intransitive *nalagsak=**ka***.

                  happy   =2SG.NOM

                  'You are happy.'

    b. Intransitive *'umala=**ka***   *=s*   *nan sana 'an*   *siya*.

                  get   =2SG.NOM=LOC the that   LOC   him

                        <actor>   <undergoer>

                  'Get some of that from him.'

    c. Transitive *patungan=**m***   *nan lamisa'an. .*

                  sit.on   =2SG.GEN   the table

                        <actor>   <undergoer>

                  'Sit on the table.'

    d. Transitive *'ilaku=**m***   *nan mangga.*

                  sell   =2SG.GEN   the mango

                        <actor>   <undergoer>

                  'You sell the mangoes.'

The reconstruction of the post-verbal genitive pronoun position in Proto-Extra Formosan ((7)b) is supported by the Formosan languages (external evidence) and the Philippine languages. Also in some languages.

Malayic spoken in Indonesia, the post-main verb genitive clitic position was retained as the fixed position for the agent in one of the two transitive sentence structures (Kikusawa 2003a).

On the other hand, the reconstruction of the position following the sentence initial auxiliary verb, which is at the same time the pre-main verb position ((7)a), is supported by the Formosan languages and by the Central–Eastern-Malayo–Polynesian languages, including Proto-Central-Pacific, the reconstructed structures of which are repeated in (10).

(10) The Reconstructed Proto-Central-Pacific Pronoun System (Kikusawa 2002)

Intransitive 1	**(V=)**	**Nx**	**V**	
	AUX	NOM	-TRNS	
		<actor/ undergoer>		
Intransitive 2	**(V=)**	**Nx**	**V**	**P N**
	AUX	NOM	-TRNS	LOC
		<actor>		<undergoer>
Transitive	**(V=)**	**Ny**	**V**	**Nx**
	AUX	GEN	+TRNS	NOM
		<actor>		<undergoer>

Of these, in the Central–Eastern-Malayo–Polynesian languages, the pre-main verb position is the only position where a clitic pronoun indicating either A and/or S may occur today. It is never observed occurring in the post-main verb position. And it is in this language family where many languages with an accusative system are found. Such systems always have an accusative pattern word-order contrast, whether or not they also show morphological contrast,

What this implies is that the Central–Eastern-Malayo–Polynesian languages developed a new system by acquiring new fixed clitic pronoun positions. That is, the pre-main verb position developed as the set position for S and A. Once this was established, the clitic pronoun occurred preceding the main verb, regardless of whether there was an auxiliary verb in the sentence or not. At this stage the system would still have had a morphological contrast between nominative and genitive clitic pronoun sets, but now it also had a clear word-order contrast between the pre-main verb position, which was for S and A, and the post-main verb position, which was for O. This system was apparently retained until Proto-Central-Pacific, when, subsequent to their dispersal, changes occurred independently which resulted in the pre-main verb position being generalized as the position for the subject, or Nominative of an accusative system.

Thus, the ergative to accusative alignment change in the pronominal systems discussed in this paper can be summarized as a change from a morphologically marked ergative system to one in which case was marked by word order, and which showed an accusative pattern. In some languages, the morphological contrast also developed an accusative pattern, while others lost the morphological contrast altogether and the earlier two sets merged into one set,

	PROTO-EXTRA FORMOSAN		POST-PROTO-EXTRA FORMOSAN
	S and A follow the sentence initial verb.		S and A precedes the main verb, while O follows it.
a) with auxiliary verb	**Vaux** S **V** **Vaux** A **V** O	→	**V** (S / A) **V** O
b) without auxiliary verb	**V** S **V** A O	→	(S / A) **V** O

Figure 6 The Development of the Position Contrast

	PROTO-EXTRA FORMOSAN		ACCUSATIVE-PATTERN PRONOMINAL SYSTEMS	
			a.	b.
'A'	GEN (ERG)	→	NOM	Single form for all (case-marked by word order only)
'S'	NOM (ABS)			
'O'			ACC	

Figure 7 The Loss of Morphological Contrast

depending on which of the earlier forms occurring in genitive and nominative sets happened to have been retained in each language. The development of the word order contrast and the change/loss in the morphological contrast are schematically shown in Figures 6 and 7.

6. Summary: Mechanism of the Ergative to Accusative Change in Austronesian Languages

In this paper, I have argued that many Austronesian languages with accusative pattern clitic pronoun systems today are a result of independent parallel innovations, rather than being retentions of a single change in a shared parent language. I have shown that, in Proto-Extra-Formosan, pronouns were morphologically marked so that S and O contrasted with A, showing an ergative pattern. During the period when the Central–Eastern-Malayo–Polynesian languages were dispersing, word order became the preferred means for providing the contrast between S and A with O, although morphological contrast in some of the pronominal forms persisted. As the languages spread carrying both the earlier morphological contrast and the newly acquired fixed word order, in many languages or subgroups, word order marking completely replaced the morphological marking and the distinction between the two pronominal sets was lost. The languages had, in effect, changed their actancy system from ergative to accusative. In short, the precondition for the drift which resulted in the change in case-marking pattern was the newly acquired word order, where the two morphologically different clitic pronoun sets started occurring in a shared position. The morphological merger of these two pronominal sets in many languages resulted in the change of their case-marking system from the earlier ergative-pattern to an accusative one.

How this conclusion was reached has been discussed, and an outline of the process of change and its motivation has been described. I hope that I have been able to show that, to be able to reconstruct sentence patterns accurately, it is essential to conduct a comparison and reconstruction of relevant lexical items. I also hope to have shown that unless a clear path of morphosyntactic change can be postulated, an accurate reconstruction of the forms and functions of lexical items cannot be accurately accomplished.

Abbreviations

ABS	absolutive	IF	instrumental focus
ACC	accusative	LOC	locative
AF	agent focus	LRC	Lynch, Ross and Crowley
AUX	auxiliary (verb)	MP	Malayo-Polynesian
BF	beneficiary focus	NEG	negative
CEMP	Central-Eastern-Malayo-Polynesian	NOM	nominative
DL	dual	OBL	oblique
ERG	ergative	OV	objective voice
FUT	future	P&S	Pawley and Sayaba
GEN	genitive	PC	paucal
GF	goal focus	PEF	Proto-Extra-Formosan

PL	plural	WMP	Western-Malayo-Polynesian
PRON	pronoun, or pronominal form	1	first person
+PRPR	proper	2	second person
R	realis	3	third person
SG	singular		
TRNS, TR	transitive		

+TRNS   transitive

-TRNS   intransitive

Notes

1) See Kikusawa 2002, 2003a, 2003b for details.

2) The genitive set is so named, because the same set of pronouns is used on nouns to indicate a possessor. The term nominative is used in this paper to refer to the element case-marked as the S of an intransitive sentence regardless of whether the language is accusative or ergative. This usage has a particular advantage when discussing changes involving the development of case-marking systems, in that it provides a consistent name for a constituent that remains unchanged during the shift from an ergative to an accusative language, whereas labeling the constituent as absolutive when ergative and nominative when accusative gives the false impression that a change has taken place in the function of the constituent.

3) In languages spoken today where this change has taken place, the earlier genitive set that occurred on nouns indicating the possessor was retained and is commonly recognized as a separate set from the one occurring on the verb.

4) There are a few Oceanic languages that have been reported to be ergative, apart from the Polynesian languages mentioned above that maintain relics of the old ergative system.

5) It should be noted that Figure 5 (as well as Figure 1) is a simplified version of the full family tree of Austronesian languages. This means that the assumed number of sub-branches where this change is claimed to have taken place would be far bigger than it appears here.

6) Some previous reconstructions of the Proto-Oceanic pronominal system that assume that it was an accusative system (LRC 2002, Evans 1995) reflect this fact. See Kikusawa (2003b) for a detailed discussion.

7) In some Philippine languages spoken today, the nominative pronoun expressing an undergoer follows the genitive pronoun preceding the main verb. I consider this to probably be a local innovation. See Kikusawa 2008 for related discussion.

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