

# The noun-verb distinction in Bunun

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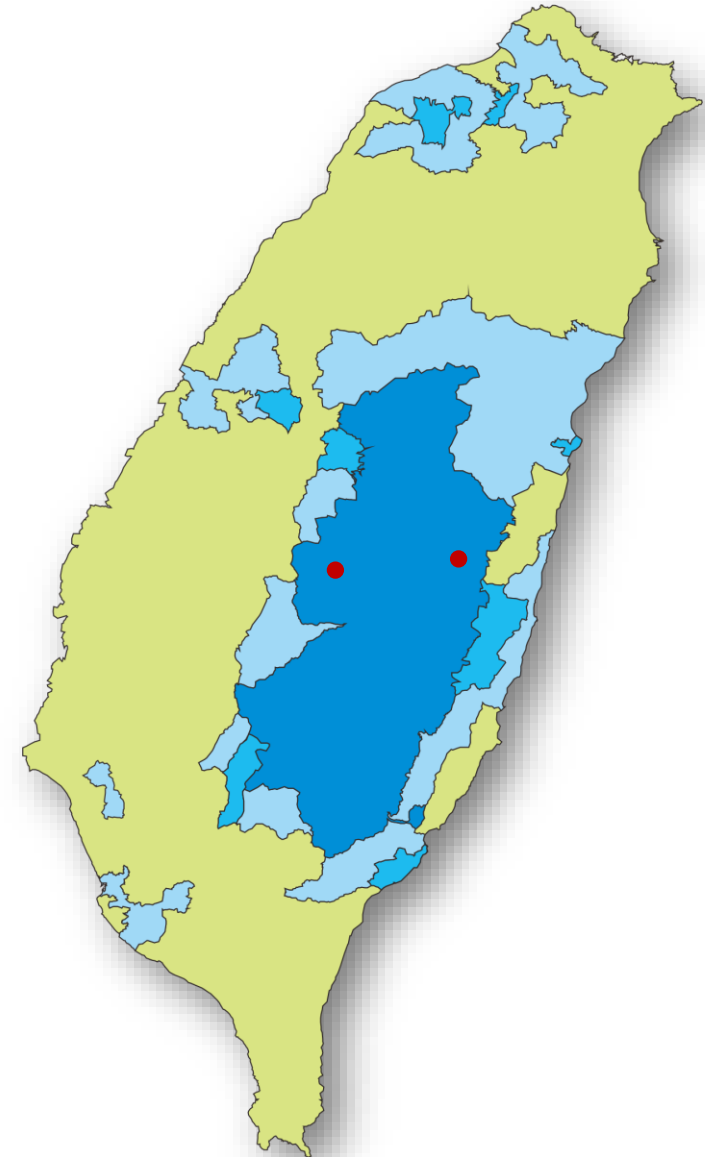


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# The Bunun language

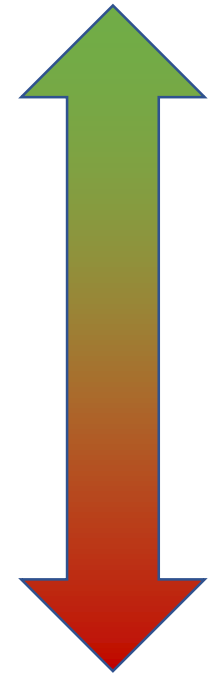
- Austronesian, Taiwan
- Five dialects
  - Northern: Takibakha, Takituduh
  - Central: **Takbanuaz, Takivatan**
  - Southern: Isbukun
- Philippine-type voice system (De Busser 2011)
  - AV, UV, LV, ...
- Very productive morphology
  - No clear distinction between inflection and derivation
  - For instance, voice markers are also nominalizers



# N-V distinctions in Austronesian

Everything is normal (but in a weird way)

- Traditional categories (Kroeger 1998)
- Non-traditional categories (Himmelman 2008)
- Nominalist hypothesis (Kaufman 2009a, 2009b)
- (Root) precategoriality (Foley 1998)
- There are no word classes (Broschart 1997; Gil 1994, 2009)



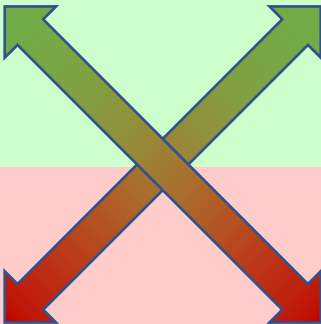
All word classes are an illusion

# A categorization problem

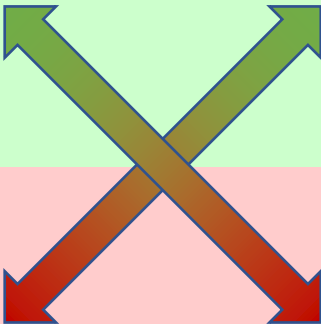
- Nature of the evidence (Evans 2000)
  - (Phonology and prosody)
  - Semantics
  - **Morphosyntax**
  - Functional information
- Probabilistic distributions of properties
- **Positive evidence**
  - Properties that establish certain phenomena as belonging to the category of nouns and verbs
- **Negative evidence**
  - Properties that exclude certain phenomena from the category of nouns or verbs



|                  | Nominal roots  | Verbal roots   |
|------------------|--|--|
| Typically can    | Be modified by determiners                                 | Be modified by TAM morphology<br>Be modified voice markers |
| Typically cannot | Be modified by TAM morphology<br>Be modified voice markers | Be modified by determiners                                 |



|                  | Nominal roots   | Verbal roots  |
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# TAM marking: progressive -aŋ

- (1) ... maupata sia lainiqaiban tu isanaŋ Sipun.  
maupa=ta                      sia              l<in>aqaiban    tu              **i-san-aŋ**                      Sipun  
thus=ART.ENT.DIST    ANAPH    <PST>route              COMPL LOC-be.at-PROG Japanese  
'... our lives were like that when the Japanese were still present.'
- (2) ... daŋiʔanani tinasʔi kaku tudipʔað Sipunaŋ.  
daŋi-an-an-i                      t<in>asʔi              kaku              tudip-ʔað                      **Sipun-aŋ**  
place-LOCATION-LV-PRT    <PST>make              school that.time-ADJR              Japanese-PROG  
'... the location of the school that was built still by the Japanese.'
- (3) Lini              Pulaʔaŋ  
Lini              **Pula-aŋ**  
L.              P.-PROG  
'Lini, then still the husband of Pula'

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# Voice marking: locative voice -*an*

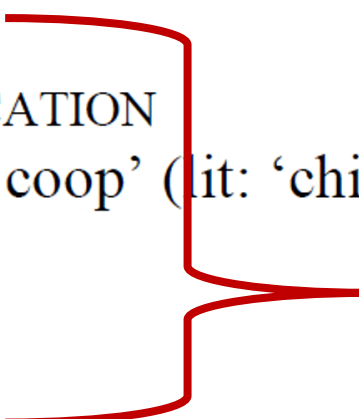
- (4) Daŋiʔan sak sui  
daŋi-an sak sui  
place-LV 1S.TOP.AG money  
'I take care of the money.'

- (5) Masihalan tu daŋiʔan  
ma-sihal-an tu daŋi-an  
STAT-good-LV ATTR place-LOCATION  
'It is a good place'

- (6) Tatasʔian hulus  
ta-tasʔi-an hulus  
CV-make-LOCATION clothes  
'a shop that is professionally making clothes'

**LV ≈ LOCATION?**

# Voice marking: locative voice -*an*

- (7) istasʔi tulkukan  
is-tasʔi      tulkuk-an  
INSTR-make    chicken-LOCATION  
'I use it do build a chicken coop' (lit: 'chicken location')
- (8) baunan  
buan-an  
moon-LV  
'the moon is shining'
- LOCATION ≈ LV?**
- 

# Problems

- TAM marks verbs and nouns (but more readily verbs)
- Voice marks verbs and nouns (but more readily verbs?)
- Voice markers  $\approx$  nominalizers
- Definiteness markers mark nouns and verbs (but more readily nouns) (De Busser 2017)
- ...



# Solutions

1. All morphology is derivational
  - Precategoriality of (1) roots and (2) voice-marked stems
  - Word classes are construction-dependent
2. Radial prototypes with vague boundaries
3. Predicational and referential morphology is functionally motivated
4. The stuff Holger Diessel talked about this morning?
  - Network-based analysis
  - Word classes are defined in terms of their position and connectedness within a linguistic network
  - Accounts for vague boundaries and distributional differences

# More problems

1. Statistical distributions in use
    1. TAM and voice marking more common on verbs than nouns
  2. Word-class dependent polysemy
    - Voice vs. nominalization
  3. Translation equivalents
    - Does English make us see things that do not exist?
- More research etc. etc.



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A Central Bunun case study*

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