Abui applicatives and other valency-increasing morphology

This paper discusses the applicatives and other valency-increasing morphology in Abui, a Papuan language of Eastern Indonesia, belonging to the Central Alor branch of the Timor-Alor-Pantar family (Kaiping and Klamer 2022; Holton et al. 2012). Abui verbal morphology has been subject to various studies which examined argument indexing (Kratochvíl 2011; 2014; Saad 2020a) and the factors driving it (Fedden et al. 2013; 2014; Kratochvíl and Delpada 2015; Klamer and Kratochvíl 2018) including the effects of the ongoing language shift (Saad 2020b). However, none of the above works considered the argument indexing from the point of view of valency and valency-changing operations.

Abui has a general applicative prefix *ming- ~ miing-* which can add an argument to the verb that is otherwise marked with the allative case marker, as seen in (1). This prefix is general and does not specify any other semantic features of the applied object, unlike the other valency-increasing prefixes. Similar in function to the general applicative *ming- ~ miing-* are the deictic prefixes exemplified in (2) which in addition to adding an applied object also specify the distance and vector (direction towards). The prefix *ming-* adds locations (2a-c), the medial *la- ~ laa-* adds causes or circumstances (2b). Directional prefixes *dong- ~ doong-* and *lang- ~ laang-* add goals and distinguish their distance, as constructed in the interaction (2c-d). All four prefixes, listed in Table 2, typically add or modify various inanimate arguments (locations) and historically derive from other TAP prefixes.[1]

In addition to the above applicative prefixes, Abui possesses pronominal prefixes indexing benefactives (**BEN**), human goals (**GOAL**), and companions (**COM**), which differentiate human applied objects, as listed in Table 2. These prefixes fuse the applicative feature with person-number indexes. Crucially, these prefixes can sometimes express the intransitive subject and can therefore no longer be considered applicative because in that use they do not add an applied object to the verb. The benefactive paradigm (**BEN**) can be used to add a benefactive argument (3a) or a cause (3b). The goal paradigm (**GOAL**) adds a human object towards which the activity is oriented: a goal of a motion in (4a-b) or a patient who receives the treatment (4c). A minimal pair, illustrating the contrast between the **BEN** and **GOAL** paradigm is given in (5). Finally, the comitative (**COM**) marks human companions (6).

---

[1] Abui applicative prefixes share cognates with other Alor languages: *la(ng)-* with East Alor languages Kui *la-*, Sawila *li-*, Kula, and Wersing *le-* and *ming-* with cognates in the central-eastern Alor languages, Klon, Kafoa, Kui, Kamang, Wersing, and Kula *mi-*, respectively (Schapper 2020, 30).

Data

(1) a. anuui ba e saai do pi-ut loku baai
        rain REL before come.down:PFV PROX 1PL.INCL.AL-garden PL ADD
        ming-hayeei
        APPL-fall.from.above:PFV
        'the rain earlier on fell also on our gardens'   [B7.62.1a]

    b. bataa yo … nahare he-toqu=**ng** hayeei
        wood MED.ADDR… almost 3.AL-foot=ALL fall.from.above:PFV
        'the log almost fell on his foot'   [SS.43yr.M]

(2) a. ama nuku di keju mii-ba **ming**-ha-munang
        person one 3.AGT cheese take:PFV-SIM APPL-3.PAT-smell
        'a man took the cheese and smells at it'

    b. ne-kaweni he-bula e wii **ming**-hayeei
        1SG.AL-machete 3.AL-blade before stone APPL-fall.from.above:PFV
        la-paliik-di
        APPL.MED-crooked-INCH
        'the blade of my machete hit the stone and bent from that'   [EVY.1074]

    c. fala do **doong**-mareei-ba **ming**-wahai-si…
        house PROX ALL.PROX-go.up:PFV-SIM APPL-look:PFV-CNFT
        'they went into the house and looked inside and then…'   [MM.YF.2125.6]

    d. awaai baai ba mi pelastik hu **laang**-ia
        chalk ADD TOP take plastic.bag DIST.ADDR ALL.MD-put:IPFV
        'the lime has been put in the plastic bag (i.e. not it the proper container)'
        [CV.AH.56]

(3) a. na-taang na-riik=hare, a **nee**-kafii-te
        1SG.INAL-hand 1SG.PAT-hurt=so 2SG.AGT 1SG.BEN-scrape:PFV-PRIOR
        'my hand hurts, so scrape (the leaves) in my stead'   [EVY.1282]

    b. afe Len he-yaa nu hen **nala hee**-ha-riik-e?
        before name 3.AL-mother SPC 3.COP what 3.BEN-3.PAT-hurt-PROG
        'what did Len's mother suffer from earlier on?'   [AAA.854]

(4) a. tafuda dee-l=to-liyol-i-ba raaha **hoo**-baleei
        all 3.REFL.BEN-GIVE=DISTR.REC-gather-PFV-SIM chief 3.GOAL-around:PFV
        'everybody gathered and surrounded around the king'   [B7.57.3a]

    b. di el mii **noo**-ha-kuoili
        3AGT before take:PFV 1SG.GOAL-3.PAT-throw.down:PFV
        'he has dropped it at me (lit. he took it, dropped it at me)' [N2012.123]

    c. a **hoo**-daweeng-di?
        2SG.AGT 3.GOAL-cure-INCH
        'did you treat her (with medicine)?'   [Alowai.LAF.205]

(5) a. a raaha **hee**-kariiyang?
       2SG.AGT   king   3.BEN-work:IPFV
       'are you doing the king's work (i.e. working instead of the king)?' [EL.BD.OL]

   b. a raaha **hoo**-kariiyang?
       2SG.AGT   king   3.GOAL-work:IPFV
       'are you working in the king's service (but not instead of the king)?' [B7.29.1e]

(6) a. Simon di **nada**-mui~muila
       name 3.AGT   1SG.COMIT-RDP~play:IPFV
       'Simon is playing with me'   [EL.BD.OL]

   b. do-adik-tinei   haba di   **nada**-anaanra
       3.REFL.REC-mat-weave:IPFV   but   3.AGT 1SG.COMIT-talk:IPFV
       'he is weaving mats but he is also speaking with me'   [B7.35.5]

Table 1: Abui deictic, directional and applicative prefixes

DISTANCE	DEICTIC	DIRECTIONAL	GENERAL APPLICATIVE
PROXIMAL		dong- ~ doong-	ming- ~ miing
MEDIAL	la- ~ laa-	lang- ~ laaang-	

Table 2: Abui benefactive, goal and comitative prefixes

	BENEFACTIVE	GOAL	COMITATIVE
1SG	nee-	noo-	nada-
2SG	ee-	oo-	ada-
3	hee-	hoo-	hada-
3.REFL	dee-	doo-	dada-
DISTR	tee-	too-	tada-
1PL.INCL	nii-	nuu- ~ noo-	nida-
1PL.EXCL	pii-	puu- ~ poo-	pida-
2PL	rii-	ruu- ~ roo-	rida-

References

Fedden, Sebastian, Dunstan Brown, Greville G. Corbett, Gary Holton, Marian Klamer, Laura C. Robinson, and Antoinette Schapper. 2013. "Conditions on Pronominal Marking in the Alor-Pantar Languages." *Linguistics* 51 (1): 33–74.

Fedden, Sebastian, Dunstan Brown, František Kratochvíl, Laura C Robinson, and Antoinette Schapper. 2014. "Variation in Pronominal Indexing: Lexical Stipulation vs. Referential Properties in Alor-Pantar Languages." *Studies in Language* 38 (1): 44–79.

Holton, Gary, Marian Klamer, František Kratochvíl, Laura C. Robinson, and Antoinette Schapper. 2012. "The Historical Relations of the Papuan Languages of Alor and Pantar." *Oceanic Linguistics* 51 (1): 86–122.

Kaiping, Gereon A., and Marian Klamer. 2022. "The Dialect Chain of the Timor-Alor-Pantar Language Family: A New Analysis Using Systematic Bayesian Phylogenetics." *Language Dynamics and Change* 12 (2): 274–326. https://doi.org/10.1163/22105832-bja10019.

Klamer, Marian, and František Kratochvíl. 2018. "The Evolution of Differential Object Marking in Alor-Pantar Languages." In *Diachrony of Differential Argument Marking*, edited by Ilja A. Seržant and Alena Witzlack-Makarevich, 69–98. Studies in Diversity Linguistics. Berlin: Language Science Press.

Kratochvíl, František. 2011. "Transitivity in Abui." *Studies in Language* 35 (3): 588–635.

———. 2014. "Differential Argument Realization in Abui." *Linguistics* 52 (2): 543–602.

Kratochvíl, František, and Benidiktus Delpada. 2015. "Degrees of Affectedness and Verbal Prefixation in Abui (Papuan)." In *Proceedings of the 22nd International Conference on Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar, Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore*, edited by Stefan Müller, 216–33. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.

Kratochvíl, František, and Luís Morgado da Costa. 2022. "Abui Wordnet: Using a Toolbox Dictionary to Develop a Wordnet for a Low-Resource Language." In *Proceedings of the First Workshop on NLP Applications to Field Linguistics*, 54–63. Gyeongju, Republic of Korea: International Conference on Computational Linguistics. https://aclanthology.org/2022.fieldmatters-1.7.

Kratochvíl, František, George Saad, Jiří Vomlel, and Václav Kratochvíl. 2022. "Automatic Verb Classifier for Abui (AVC-Abz)." In *Proceedings of The Workshop on Resources and Technologies for Indigenous, Endangered and Lesser-Resourced Languages in Eurasia within the 13th Language Resources and Evaluation Conference*, 42–50. Marseille, France: European Language Resources Association. https://aclanthology.org/2022.eurali-1.7.

Saad, George. 2020a. "Abui." In *The Papuan Languages of Timor, Alor and Pantar: Volume 3 Sketch Grammars*, edited by Antoinette Schapper, 267–346. Boston/Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501511158-005.

———. 2020b. "Variation and Change in Abui - The Impact of Alor Malay on an Indigenous Language of Indonesia." Leiden: Leiden University. https://www.lotpublications.nl/variation-and-change-in-abui-the-impact-of-alor-malay-on-an-indigenous-language-of-indonesia-2.

Schapper, Antoinette. 2020. "Introduction to The Papuan Languages of Timor, Alor and Pantar. Volume 3." In *The Papuan Languages of Timor, Alor and Pantar: Volume 3: Sketch Grammars*, edited by Antoinette Schapper, 1–52. Boston/Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Zamaraeva, Olga, František Kratochvíl, Emily M. Bender, Fei Xia, and Kristen Howell. 2017. "Computational Support for Finding Word Classes: A Case Study of Abui." In *Proceedings of ComputEL-2: 2nd Workshop on Computational Methods for Endangered Languages, Honolulu, Hawaii, March 6-7, 2017*. Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).