An introduction to the Atayal language

with a focus on its morphosyntax (and semantics)

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Sept 16th, 2019

▶ What do **Formosan languages** refer to?

Background to Formosan languages

▶ What do **Formosan languages** refer to?
  $\rightarrow$ the languages of the aboriginal/indigenous peoples of Taiwan

Background to Formosan languages

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  ⤳ the languages of the aboriginal/indigenous peoples of Taiwan

- Which language family do Formosan languages belong to?

Background to Formosan languages

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▶ Which language family do Formosan languages belong to?
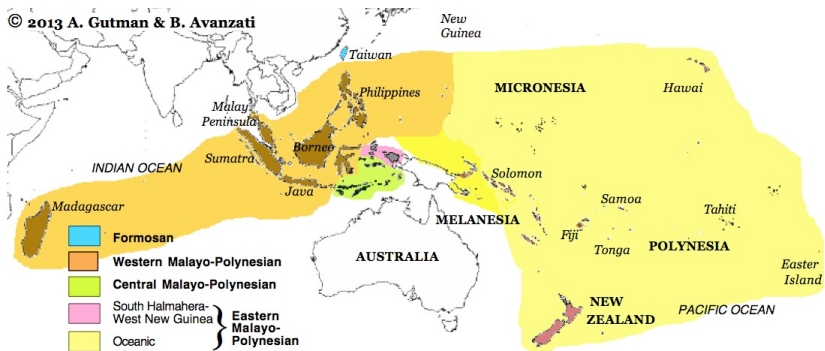⇢ **Austronesian**

Background to Formosan languages

- ▶ What do **Formosan languages** refer to?
  ⇢ the languages of the aboriginal/indigenous peoples of Taiwan

- ▶ Which language family do Formosan languages belong to?
  ⇢ **Austronesian**
  - It has around 1,200 or so languages, probably the largest family among the 6,000 languages of the modern world.

- ▶ What is the distribution of the Austronesian languages?

Austronesian languages (east: Easter Island; west: Madagascar; south: New Zealand; **north: Taiwan**)
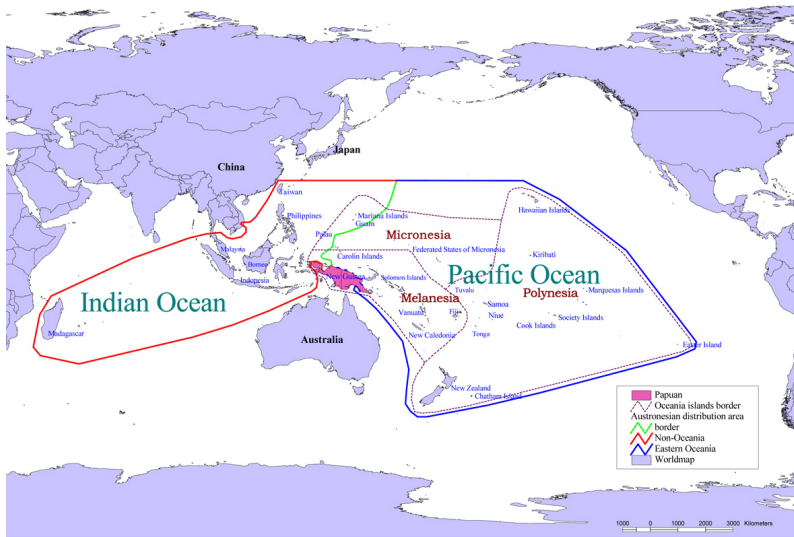
Subgroups of the Austronesian languages

www.languagesgulper.com/eng/Austronesian.html

Proto-Austronesian

Rukai   Puyuma   …   Atayal   …   Malayo-Polynesian

Western   Central-Eastern

Formosan languages (an areal name) [1]

[1]Yami (Tao) is the only language that belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian branch (Batanic, Philippine), cf. proj1.sinica.edu.tw/ damta/ly02-3.html

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Subgrouping of Proto-Austronesian

Proto-Austronesian

Rukai   Puyuma   ...   Atayal   ...   Malayo-Polynesian

Western   Central-Eastern
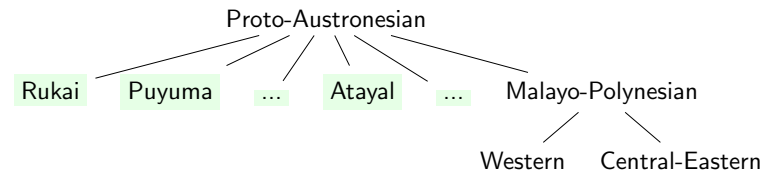
Formosan languages (an areal name) [1]

Taiwan: birthplace of Austronesian

The AN family has been considered as descending from an ancestor spoken in Taiwan 5500-6000 years ago because Formosan languages show the greatest linguistic diversity among Austronesian languages.

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[1]Yami (Tao) is the only language that belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian branch (Batanic, Philippine), cf. proj1.sinica.edu.tw/ damta/ly02-3.html

台灣南島語言的多樣性

李壬癸

中央研究院

　　國際南島語言學界一般都認爲台灣南島語言的差異性最大，遠非其他地區（包括菲律賓、馬來西亞、印尼）的南島語言所能比。一個地區的語言歧異性愈大，顯示其時代的縱深愈長，就愈有可能是該語族的起源地和擴散中心。因此，各種台灣南島語言，包括已消失的幾種平埔族語言，都值得做深入的研究。本文首次全面檢驗各種台灣南島語言各層次的多樣性，包括詞序、焦點系統、助動詞、數詞、人稱代詞、複合詞、詞綴、音韻等，並且儘量涵蓋較少人知道的語言，如巴宰、巴賽、法佛朗、西拉雅。

List of the **16** Formosan languages

阿美族：阿美族分佈在中⋯

泰雅族：泰雅族分布在台⋯

排灣族：排灣族以台灣南⋯

布農族：布農族分布於中⋯

卑南族：卑南族分布於台⋯

魯凱族：魯凱族分布於高⋯

鄒族：鄒族主要居住於嘉⋯
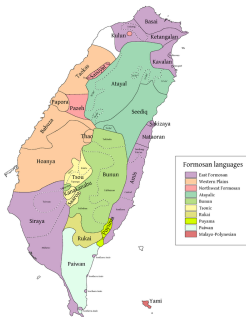
賽夏族：賽夏族居住於新⋯

雅美族：雅美族分布於台⋯

邵族：邵族分布於南投縣⋯

噶瑪蘭族：噶瑪蘭族，過⋯

太魯閣族：太魯閣族大致⋯
卓溪鄉立山、崙山等地。

撒奇萊雅族：撒奇萊雅族⋯

賽德克族：賽德克族的發⋯
方的布農族之間。

拉阿魯哇族：高雄市桃源⋯

卡那卡那富族：高雄市那瑪⋯

www.oup.com/us/ohcl

Blust (1999)

1. Atayalic (self-evident).
2. East Formosan: 1) merger of *t/C, 2) merger of *j/n, 3) shift of *q > ʔ
   2.1. Northern branch (Basay-Trobiawan; Kavalan): 1) merger of *q/∅,
       2) merger of n/N; 3) irregular change in *susu > /sisu/ 'breast'
       2.1.1. Basay-Trobiawan: 1) merger of *s/l
       2.1.2. Kavalan
   2.2. Central branch (Amis)
   2.3. Southwest branch (Siraya)
3. Puyuma
4. Paiwan
5. Rukai
6. Tsouic
7. Bunun
8. Western Plains: 1) merger of *n/ŋ, 2) merger of *s and *t in non-final
   position (extended to final position in Thao), 3) merger of *w/y/∅
   through truncation of the diphthongs *-ay and *-aw (a change that is still
   in progress in Thao; for details cf. Tsuchida 1982: 9ff, Blust 1996a)
   8.1. Central Western Plains
       8.1.1. Taokas-Babuza
       8.1.2. Papora-Hoanya
   8.2. Thao
9. Northwest Formosan: 1) shift of *C > *s, 2) shift of *q > ʔ
   9.1. Saisiyat
   9.2. Kulon-Pazeh: 1) merger of *q/∅, 2) merger of *C/S except in 'fire'
       and 'wood/tree', where *S > /h/

Ross (2009)

1. *Puyuma*
2. *Rukai*
3. *Tsou*
4. Nuclear Austronesian
   a. *Kanakanavu* and *Saaroa*
   b. Northwest Formosan: *Saisiyat, Kulon-Pazih*[32]
   c. Atayalic: the dialects of *Atayal* and *Seediq*
   d. Western Plains: *Thao, Taokas, Favorlang-Babuza, Papora, Hoanya*
   e. *Bunun*
   f. *Paiwan*
   g. East Formosan: *Basay-Trobiawan, Kavalan, Amis, Siraya*
   h. Malayo-Polynesian: all extra-Formosan Austronesian languages (including *Yami*, which lies within Taiwan's political boundary)
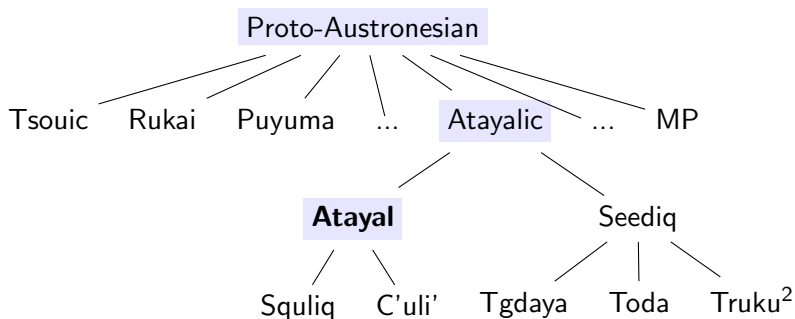
2The Truku dialect spoken in Hualian was officially separated from the rest
Seediq dialects in 2004 and became the 12th aboriginal language of Taiwan.

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Officially recognized Atayalic languages and dialects
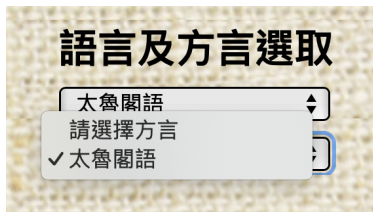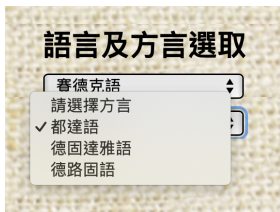
Huang and Wu (2016)
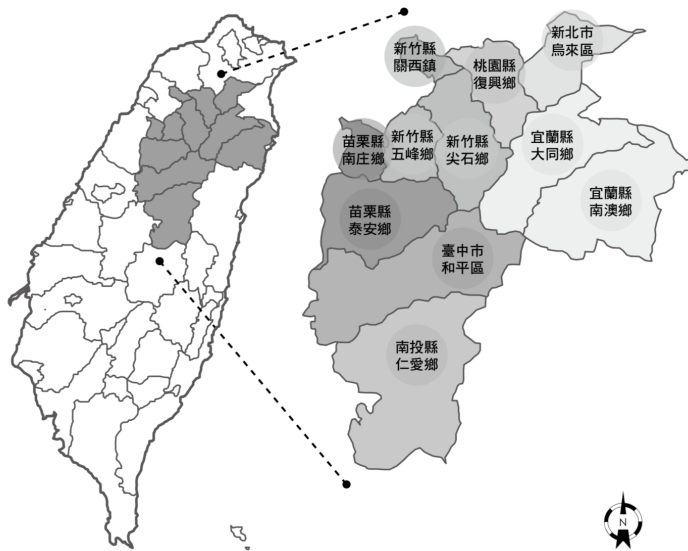
Vowels and consonants

5 vowels: a e i o u

19 consonants: p b t k g q c s h l r m n ng[ŋ] w x y z '[ʔ]

papak 'ear'

qmalup 'hunt'

bazing 'egg'

kakay 'foot, feet'

gamil 'root'

ruku 'umbrella'

ngasal [ŋa.sal] 'house, home'

qoli' [qo.liʔ] 'mouse, mice'

web.klokah.tw

Stress

Stress falls on the last syllable.

papak [pa.pák] 'ear'

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Do you notice anything not yet mentioned from this set of data?

ppshtoq 'will cause something to fall off'

---

[3]They either surface as a schwa or an apical vowel homorganic to the preceding sibilant (Huang 2006:11).

ppshtoq 'will cause something to fall off'

▶ A schwa is epenthesized to separate consonant clusters:
blaq [bə.laq]
ghap [gə.hap]

▶ Pre-penultimate vowels are consistently reduced to a schwa.
huziq 'wet' + -an 'LV' = hziqan [hə.zi.qan]
biq 'give' + -i 'PV/LV.DEP' = biqi [bi.qi]

---

[3]They either surface as a schwa or an apical vowel homorganic to the preceding sibilant (Huang 2006:11).

kki'an 'the place where someone lives'

ggalan 'will be taken for something'

pinsbkan 'the place where a stone splits/Atayal's birthplace'

tciku' 'shrink'

mpsgagay 'separate from each other'

Words and morphology

There are many ways to form a word.

▶ Morphology is the study of the structure of words.

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Basic classification of words

- simple words
- complex words
  - ▶ **affixation**
  - ▶ reduplication
  - ▶ compounding
  - ▶ ...

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> ## Basic classification of words
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>   - ▶ **affixation**
>   - ▶ reduplication
>   - ▶ compounding
>   - ▶ ...

Can you think of examples in Mandarin Chinese for each class?

Identifying **root** and **affix** is the first step of understanding word composition.

<div align="center">

hinbyatan ⇒ **h-in-byat-an**

</div>

hbyat 'pull out something'	verb root
-in- 'PST (past tense)'	infix
-an 'LV (locative voice)'	suffix

<div align="center">

minpahuw ⇒ **m-in-pahuw**

</div>

pahuw 'break something'	verb root
-in- 'PST (past tense)'	infix
m- 'AV (actor voice)'	prefix

Affixation in Atayal

k-	
bway 'fruit'	k-bway 'to bear fruit'
yamil 'shoes'	k-yamil 'to wear shoes'
'ulay' 'Wulai'	k-'ulay 'to come from Wulai'
talah 'red'	k-talah 'to become red'
babaw 'above'	k-babaw 'to go above something'

kin-	
labang 'wide'	kin-labaang 'width'
krahu' 'big'	kin-krahu' 'bigness'

p-	
laqi' 'child'	p-laqi' 'to give birth to a child'
lukus 'clothes'	p-lukus 'to wear clothes'
tara' 'fish net'	p-tara' 'to net fish with fish net'
qaniq 'to eat'	p-qaniq 'to feed someone'
tucing 'to hit someone'	p-tucing 'to hit each other'
qalup 'to hunt'	p-qalup 'hunter'

suffixes	-an
infixes	-in-
circumfixes	in-...-an
	kin-...-an
	-in-...-an

prefixes[a]	t-
	s-
	k-
	p-
	c-
	’-
	l-
	lk-
	pk-
	cin-
	pin-
	...

---

[a]See Wu (2008) for the details.

Sentences and syntax

Sentences are formed by words. Syntax is the study of how words form a sentence.

> ▶ Word order
>
> ▶ Voice/focus system
>
> ▶ Case and pronouns

Mandarin Chinese: ?

English: ?

Japanese: ?

Atayal: ?

Atayal word order I

(1) ms'su'   balay qu   Payan.
     quiet.AV truly ABS Payan
     'Payang is very quiet.'

(2) cyux   p-qaniq   'laqi'=nya'   i   Ciwas.
     PROG.DIST CAUS-eat.AV child=3SG.GEN ABS Ciwas
     'Ciwas is feeding her child.'

(3) p-tah-un   ni   Umaw kwara' ngahi'   qani.
     CAUS-grill-PV ERG Umaw all   sweet.potato this
     'Umaw will grill all these potatos.'

Taken from: https://m-dictionary.apc.gov.tw

Atayal word order II

(4) nyux=saku'   mtquh.
    PROG.PROX=1SG.ABS hurry.AV
    'I am in a hurry.'

(5) p-'agal=saku'   pila'   kira'.
    FUT.AV-take=1SG.ABS money later.today
    'I will have money later.'

(6) nyux=saku'=nya'   p-ras-an   patus.
    PROG.PROX=1SG.ABS=3SG.ERG CAUS-bring=LV gun
    'He allows me to bring a gun.'

Taken from: https://m-dictionary.apc.gov.tw

Mandarin Chinese: none

English: person agreement; tense

Other languages??

(1-1) maniq ngahi' i Silan.

[m-aniq　　　 ngahi']_{謂語}　　　　[i　　　 Silan]_{主語/主事者}
主事焦點-吃 地瓜　　　　　　　　 主格　 人名

Silan吃地瓜。

(1-2) niqun ni Silan qu ngahi'.

[niq-un　 ni　　 Silan]_{謂語}　　　 [qu　　 ngahi']_{主語/受事者}
吃-受事焦點 屬格　 人名　　　　　　 主格　 地瓜

地瓜被Silan吃。

(1-3) niqan ni Silan mami' qu hanray qani.

[niq-an   ni   Silan mami']_{謂語} [qu <u>hanray qani</u>]_{主語/地點}

吃-處所焦點   屬格   人名   飯   主格   <u>桌子</u>   這

Silan吃飯的地方是桌子 (Silan 在桌上吃飯)。

(1-4) sqaniq ni Silan mami' qu qqway qani.

[s-qaniq   ni   Silan mami']_{謂語} [qu   <u>qqway qani</u>]_{主語/工具}

周邊焦點-吃   屬格 人名   飯   主格   <u>筷子</u>   這

Silan 用筷子吃飯。

See Huang and Wu (2006).

All sentences are marked with voice/focus (but can be without aspect or tense).

(7) a. (AUX) V+**Actor-Focus** (OBL) NOM

b. (AUX) V+**Non-Actor-Focus** (OBL) GEN NOM

PF/**LF**/**CF**

(8) a. (AUX) V+**Actor-Voice** (OBL) ABS

b. (AUX) V+**Non-Actor-Voice** (OBL) ERG ABS

PV/**LV**/**CV**

Four-way voice/focus[4]

m-, <m>, 零形式	主事焦點 (AF或AV)
-un	受事焦點 (PF或PV)
-an	處所焦點 (LF或LV)
s-	周邊焦點 (CF或CV) （又稱：工具焦點、受惠者焦點）

---

[4]Not every verb has all the four forms (see Yeh 2013).

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	eat	take	hit
AV	maniq	m-agal	t-m-ucing
PV	niq-un	gal-un	tcing-un
LV	niq-an	gal-an	tcing-an
CV	s-qaniq	s-'agal	s-tucing

---

[4]Not every verb has all the four forms (see Yeh 2013).

Q: What's voice/focus?

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A: Voice/focus is verbal marking that indicates the **semantic role** of the (grammatical) subject.

The 4-way classification is just an approximation!

(9) biq-**an**=maku'   biru' qu   Watan.
     give-LV=1SG.ERG book ABS Watan
     'I gave Watan a book.'

(10) wal=maku'   **s**-biq   ki   watan qu   biru'.
     PRF=1SG.ERG CV-give DAT Watan ABS book
     'I gave the/some book to Watan.'

(11) lax-**un**   hazi'   ni   Iban qu   kneril=nya'   wah.
     give.up-PV probably ERG Iban ABS woman=3SG.GEN PRT
     'Iban will give up his wife.'

(12) hwah-**an**=nha'   cikay ru   lax-**an**=nha'   la.
     dismantle-LV=3PL a.bit CONJ give.up-LV=3PL PRT
     'They dismantled some (of the house) but they gave it up.'

Three sets of mood

Atayal verbs not only vary in 4 voices but also in three mood categories.

> **Actor Voice**
>
> (13) **maniq** ngahi'   krryax qu   'laqi' qani.
>   eat.AV sweet.potato often ABS kid   this
>   'This kid often eats sweet potatos.'
>
> (14) **qaniq**   la!
>   eat.IMP.AV PRT
>   'Eat!'
>
> (15) **mniqa**=ta'   mami' ha!
>   eat.HORT.AV=3PL.ABS rice   first
>   'Let's eat first!'

Three sets of mood

Atayal verbs not only vary in 4 voices but also in three mood categories.

Patient Voice

(16) **niqun** nqu bnkis qasa qu qulih qani.
eat.PV ERG elder that ABS fish this
'That old man will eat this fish.'

(17) **niqi** qu syam qani!
eat.IMP.PV ABS pork this
'Eat this pork!'

(18) **niqaw**=ta' ha!
eat.HORT.PV=3PL.ABS first
'Let's eat first!'

	第一套	第二套	第三套
主事焦點	m-, -m-, 零形式	零形式	m- + -a
受事焦點	-un	-i	-aw
處所焦點	-an	-i	-ay
周邊焦點	s-	-ani, -an	-anay

Example

詞根 tucing	第一套			第二套	第三套
	非未來	過去	未來		
主焦	tmucing	tmnucing	ptucing	tucing	t(m)cinga
受焦	tcingun	tnucing	ptcingun	(p)tcingi	tcingaw
處焦	tcingan	tncingan	ptcingun	(p)tcingi	tcingay
周焦	stucing	stnucing	stucing (sptucing)	ani (p)stucing	anay sptucing

Try kita' 'see'.

詞根 kita'	第一套			第二套	第三套
	非未來	過去	未來		
主焦	mita'	mnita'	pkita'	kita'	kta
受焦	ktun		ktun	ktay, kti (kte)	ktaw
處焦	ktan	kinntan	ktan	ktay	ktay
周焦	skita'	sknita'	skita'	ani skita' = sktani'	ktanay

Case marking

Every noun in a sentence carries case marking, which indicates the grammatical role of the noun.

(19) niq-**un** ni   Silan **qu ngahi'**.
      eat-PV ERG Silan ABS sweet.potato
      'Silan ate the sweet potato.'

(20)# niq-**un** ni   ngahi'   **qu Silan**.
      eat-PV ERG sweet.potato ABS Silan
      'The sweet potato ate Silan.'

Case marking

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(21) niq-**un** ni   Silan **qu   ngahi'**.
      eat-PV ERG Silan ABS sweet.potato

      'Silan ate the sweet potato.'

(22)# niq-**un** ni   ngahi'   **qu Silan**.
      eat-PV ERG sweet.potato ABS Silan

      'The sweet potato ate Silan.'

名詞 \ 格位標記	主格	屬格	處所格	工具格	伴同格
人稱專有名詞	i	ni	ki	–	ki
普通名詞	qu	na; nqu	i; sa; te; squ	na	–

Huang and Wu (2016:61)

Pronouns

Just like nouns, pronouns carry case marking and this is directly reflected in their forms.

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English: I/me

Atayal: saku'/ku', maku'/mu', knan, kun, kuzing ...

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Just like nouns, pronouns carry case marking and this is directly reflected in their forms.

English: I/me

Atayal: saku'/ku', maku'/mu', knan, kun, kuzing ...

(27) soy-an=**maku'**   balay i   Emi'.
     like-LV=1SG.ERG truly ABS Emi
     'I really like Emi'.

(28) soy-an=**saku'**   balay ni   Emi'.
     like-LV=1SG.ABS truly ERG Emi
     'Emi' really likes me.'

Bound vs. free pronouns

Bound pronouns attach to the first auxiliary/verb in a sentence, whereas free pronouns behave as nouns.

(29) p-bhul=**saku'**   qhuniq na' **kun**   hiya'.
      FUT.AV-tie=1SG.ABS wood   still 1SG.N EMP

      'I still need to tie wood.'

List of pronouns

人稱代名詞			附著式		自由式	
數	人稱		主格	屬格	處所格	中性格
單數	一		saku'; ku'	maku'; mu	knan	kun; kuzing
	二		su'	su'	sunan	isu'
	三		–	nya'	hiyan	hiya'
複數	一	包含式	ta'	ta'	itan	'ita'
		排除式	sami	myan	sminan	sami
	二		simu	mamu	smunan	simu
	三		–	nha'	lhan	lha'; nha'
	一屬格+二主格		misu'		–	–

Huang and Wu (2016:67)

- the distribution of Austronesian, Formosan, and Atayalic languages

Review

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- the grouping of Formosan and Atayalic languages

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- the Atayal sound inventory

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- word formation and the affixation in Atayal

- the voice/focus system in Atayal

- the case marking and pronouns in Atayal

- **Something you learnt:**
  What is the thing that you don't know about Formosan languages/Atayal before coming to this class, which you think is interesting?

- **How would you introduce the Atayal language?**
  If you had to introducee Atayal to your friends, what would be the top thing you explain to them?