

## ABSTRACT:

Another look at the Saisiyat case marking system:  
Synchronic and diachronic implications

Elizabeth Zeitoun  
Academia Sinica

### Abstract

The present paper first examines the use and functions of the comitative **ki** marker ‘with’. Following previous analyses (cf. Starosta 1974, and Yeh 1991), **ki** is treated as a “comitative case marker”. Two major findings are made: (i) **ki** can be marked as plural, cf. **ki-l**, when followed by personal nouns, and (ii) there is a need to recognize a new set of pronouns, cf. the “comitative” **ki**-set.

Research on **ki** further leads to a reassessment of the Saisiyat case marking system. While the Saisiyat case marking of Saisiyat has correctly been analyzed as displaying a distinction between common nouns and personal nouns (Yeh 1991), I show however that a number of empirical facts have been neglected in the past, and relate these to an earlier hypothesis I made (see Zeitoun 2001) about the need to reconstruct two plural affixes /a/ and /la/ in PAn.

More specifically, I show that:

(i) there is a distinction in plurality in Saisiyat.

- Personal nouns can be marked as plural through the affixation of **la-** to the base (e.g. *(hi) la-'oemaw* ‘Oemaw and the persons related to him (Nom/Acc)’). Three case markers (Nom, Acc and Com) can also be marked as plural through the suffixation of **-l** (the following noun must be left unmarked for plurality, cf. *hi-l 'oemaw* ‘Oemaw and the persons related to him (Nom/Acc)’).

- Common nouns referring to humans (e.g., *korkoring* ‘child’) can also be marked for plurality (e.g., *la-korkoring* ‘children’). However, when marked for plural, they must be preceded by a personal case marker unmarked for plurality (cf. *hi korkoring* ‘children (Nom/Acc)’), i.e., they cannot be preceded by (i) common noun case markers (cf. *\*ka la-korkoring*) and (ii) by personal case marker marked for plurality (cf. *\*hi-l korkoring*).

(iii) Data from Saisiyat adds evidence to the bulk of comparative data mentioned in Zeitoun (2001), whereby two plural affixes (cf. **a-/a** and **la-/l**) were shown to occur on nouns (or case markers) and pronouns in several Formosan languages and support the claim that these two affixes should be reconstructed in Proto-Austronesian.

## **References**

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