

Manifestations of Participants in Atayal: A Cross-dialectal Study

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Atayal is one of the Austronesian languages spoken in Taiwan. It consists of two major subgroups, namely, Squliq and C'uli'; the former is considered to be more innovative and has lost a lot of information for historical reconstruction, whereas the latter is regarded as being more conservative and useful for historical and comparative reasons. The dialectal variants investigated in this paper are (1) that of Wulai, a Squliq dialect spoken in Wulai County, Taipei Prefecture, (2) that of Mayrinax, a C'uli' dialect spoken in Tai-an County, Miaoli Prefecture, and (3) that of Pngawan, a C'uli' dialect spoken in Jen-ai County, Nantou Prefecture.

The present paper attempts to provide a description of the morphosyntactic manifestations of participants in the Atayal language, including the nominal case marking system and the pronominal system in each of the above-named dialects. As presented below, each Atayal dialect has different sets of case markers, with the Mayrinax set being further divided into marking common nouns and proper nouns:

case \ dialect	Nom	Acc	Dat	Gen	Ben	Loc	Ins	Com	Neu
Wulai	+	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-
Mayrinax	Common	+	+	+/-	+	+/-	+	+	-
	Proper	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+
Pngawan	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-

The above case marking systems will be examined in terms of their morphological shapes and syntactic/semantic functions.

Similarly, the named dialects have different sets of pronominal systems, as illustrated in the following chart:

dialect case	free-bound	Bound		Free	
		Nominative	Genitive	Locative	Neutral
Wulai		+	+	+	+
Mayrinax		+	+	-	+
Pngawan		+	+	+	+

These pronouns will be further discussed with regard to their phonological, morphological, syntactic/distributional and semantic/functional similarities and differences.

category case	free-bound	Bound		Free	
		Nominative	Genitive	Locative	Neutral
Form	1 syllable	+	+	-	-
	More syllables	+	+	+	+
Syntax/ distribution	Marked by case markers	-	-	-	+/-
	As Predicate	-	-	+	+
	As Topic	-	-	+	+
	Alone as response	-	-	+	+
Function	Emphatic/contrast	-	-	+	+
	Disambiguation	-	-	+	+

In this paper, the ordering of pronouns, free and bound, will also be discussed.

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