

# POSTER

## THE FUNCTION OF PARTICLE *BE* IN BIAK LANGUAGE

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The Biak language is named after its people, the culture and the island. It is classified as an Austronesian language and is spoken by more than 40,000 people, out of 116,176 people, who inhabit the island and a few adjacent smaller islands that lie off the north coast of Papua province of Indonesia.

Of Biak language, particle *BE* plays very significant roles in generating many linguistic functions of the language. It behaves in a unique but systematic way of forming linguistic patterns from the level of phonological and lexical segments into the hierarchy of morpho-syntactic structures and socio-linguistic settings. In the clause *YARA BE SWAN* 'I go to the shore (usually for fishing)' particle *BE* functions as preposition. Adding *BE* to the above clause *BE YARA BE SWAN* 'I am going to go to the shore' the particle *BE* at the beginning of the clause marks "desiderative kind of tense", while the second *BE* indicates preposition. The particle can also derive new category of words from a noun phrase to an adjective phrase by affixing *BE* to the stem, e.g. *RIK* is a noun meaning 'blood' which can become adjective *BERIK* meaning 'red colour'. Particle *BE* itself can be a verb phrase or possessive maker. Its generating capacity is not limited only to changing active sentence constructions into passive ones but also to the one of the strategies in formulating relative clauses in Biak; i.e. particle *BE* functions as relativizer. For instance, *ROMAWA BEKAR AI IYA IFRAR RA SUP* meaning 'The boy who chopped down that tree has escaped into the jungle'. With the glossing *ROMAWA* 'the boy'; *KAR* 'chop down'; *AI* 'tree'; *IYA* 'that'; *I* '3SG'; *FRAR* 'escaped'; *RA* 'already to'; *SUP* 'jungle'; we can say that *BIAK* is subject-verb-object word order of which *BE* is a relative particle that relativizes the subject *ROMAWA* 'the boy' of the matrix clause as the subject of the embedded clause. In other cases of relativizing, a clausal modifier that can be generated by this particle *BE* occupies the same position as the adjective that modifies the head noun. This pattern of N-A order reflects one part of the principle of typological "harmony" in which Biak language also tends to have post nominal relative clauses (N-Rel).

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