5 PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

This chapter describes the prepositional phrase, which comprises a preposition as the head and its headed noun phrase. The simple prepositions available in Mualang are given first and explained individually in terms of their function. For the sake of convenience, the prepositions are categorized as locative prepositions (5.1), which are da, ka, ari, ntara, sampay, and nyantuk; and non-locative prepositions (5.2), which are ngaw, aba', ulih, upa, nuna', and ngusung. Locative prepositions share a common semantic feature expressing location or direction of the noun or noun phrase they head, although, their function can be extended to other uses as well. Some of the prepositions have clearly developed from verbs and still co-exist with their verbal counterparts, which occasionally may lead to semantic ambiguity, notably when they are used with another verb in a serial verb construction (SVC). Grammatical features of SVC’s will be discussed later in Chapter 10. However, in this chapter it will be shown that there are at least three grammatical clues that are associated with the prepositional function, namely coreferentiality of clausal arguments, word order, and morphological reduction. In SVC’s, both verbs share the same subject, but such an interpretation does not apply to prepositions, thus (5-1) cannot be interpreted as ‘he ate and followed me somewhere’.

\[(5-1) \quad \text{Ia } N\text{-pakay } aba' \quad \text{ku.} \]
\[3s \quad \text{ACT-eat} \quad \text{with/follow} \quad 1s \]
\[\text{‘He ate with me.’} \]

Typically as an adjunct, the word order of a prepositional phrase within a clause may be changed (for focus), as in (5-2) or (5-3):

\[(5-2) \quad \text{Ia } aba' \quad \text{ku } N\text{-pakay.} \]
\[3s \quad \text{with} \quad 1s \quad \text{ACT-eat} \]
\[\text{‘It was with me, that he ate.’} \]

\[(5-3) \quad \text{Aba' } \text{ku } \text{ia } N\text{-pakay.} \]
\[\text{with} \quad 1s \quad 3s \quad \text{ACT-eat} \]
\[\text{‘He ate with me (rather than with someone else).’} \]

Several prepositions even now retain the inflected prefix of the verb as in ngusung (from gusung ‘to meet, to go after’) and nuna’ (from tuna’ ‘to follow’).¹

¹ It is hard to make any comments about aba’, ngaw and sampay since they always appear in their bare form.
After discussing the locative and non-locative prepositions in 5.1 and 5.2 respectively, I will proceed to complex prepositions in 5.3.

5.1 **Locative prepositions**

5.1.1 **The preposition da**

The preposition *da* ‘LOC’ has *di* as its variant. Their phonological manifestations have been discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.5). Its functions are as follows:

a) to express a locative role of the headed noun or noun phrases. Pronouns, names and demonstratives may be headed as well.

(5-4) `Ia diaw da padung.
3p stay LOC attic
‘He stayed quiet in the attic.’

(5-5) *Amang ku, utay ia’ aday da ia’/Apay Aluy.
think 1s thing that exist LOC 3s/AA
‘I think, the thing is on him/Aluy’s father.’

(5-6) *Agi’ nam da ku.
still six LOC 1s
‘There are still six of them with me.’

(5-7) *Nya’, da ia’/da tu’.
that LOC that/LOC this
[while pointing] ‘There it is.’ (lit. ‘at that/at this’)

b) to specify a particular point in time:

already that 1s stay here LOC year 1970
‘After that, I lived here, in 1970.’

(5-9) *Da jaman kelia’ tih, naday isi’ semprut.
LOC time old.time tih NEG content spray
‘In the past, there was no pesticide.’

C) to mark a locative oblique participant:

(5-10) *Sida’ N-pesaw da ku tih.
3p ACT-order LOC 1s tih
‘They told me the message.’
5.1.2 The preposition ka

The preposition ka can be pronounced as [ka], [ko], or [k] (see Chapter 2 section 2.5). It has three functions: directional, temporal and marking non-argument participants of the clause.

a) As a directional preposition, it expresses locational orientation of the headed noun or noun phrase, e.g.:

(5-12) \(\text{urang Mualang } k=\text{ili'}/k=\text{ulu} \)
\(\text{person M to=downstream/to=upstream} \)
\(\text{‘the Mualang from the downstream/upperstream (area)’} \)

(5-13) \(\text{Ku ka’ kin, ka rumah sida’ ia’}. \)
\(\text{1s want thither.far to house 3p that} \)
\(\text{‘I want to go over there, to their house (there).’} \)

(5-14) \(\text{Ia ba-jalay mansang ka pian bang ka jalay}. \)
\(\text{1s ANPAS-road go.to to bathing.place part to road} \)
\(\text{‘He walked going toward the bathing place of the part leading to the road.’} \)

(5-15) \(\text{Da-buay ka ia}. \)
\(\text{PASS-throw to 3s} \)
\(\text{‘(It was) thrown to him.’} \)

(5-16) \(\text{N-tebuk kayu, tama’ ka ia’...} \)
\(\text{ACT-make.hole wood enter to that} \)
\(\text{‘He made a hole in a tree, (and) entered into it ...’} \)

b) As a temporal preposition, it describes a direction to a particular point in time, e.g.:

(5-17) \(\text{ari jaman kelia’ sampay ka tu’} \)
\(\text{from time old.time until to this} \)
\(\text{‘from olden times until the present’} \)
(5-18) arî lam-lam sampay ka malam arî
from morning-RED until to night day
‘from early morning until night’

c) The preposition *ka* is also used to indicate semantic roles of non-argument or oblique participants. Its allative function is apparent as in (5-19 – 5-21), in which it shows the direction toward a participant upon which the event or action is carried out (semantic roles are further explained in Chapter 7):

(5-19) | Semua ti ku padah ka kita’ nya’ ....
| all REL 1s say to 2p that
‘All that I have told to you all …’

(5-20) | Baru’ sida’ N-kisah ka ia.
| then 3p ACT-story to s
‘Then they told the story to him.’

(5-21) | ... baru’ bar-anak ka utay ia’, ....
| then ANPAS-child to thing that
‘… then she gave birth to that thing, …’

The use of *ka* in the following examples is interesting, as its function is more bleached. Such cases will be dealt with in more detail in sections 7.2.8 and 7.3 of Chapter 7.

(5-22) | Udah ia’ da-bungkus ka dawun pisang, baru’
| already that PASS-wrap to leaf banana then
da-jua’ ka miak ia’.
PASS-give to child that
‘After that (it) was wrapped in a banana leaf, then given to the child.’

(5-23) | Naday antu te-inum ka darah.
| NEG ghost MID-drink to blood
‘The ghosts were not able to drink (up) the blood.’

(5-24) | Kami dulaw beri’ ka darah.
| 1p.excl first give to blood
‘We first were given the blood.’
e) The preposition *ka* is used in syntactic verbal reduplication to indicate continuity (see section 8.3.2), e.g.:
Chapter 5: Prepositional Phrases

besay ‘big’  besay ka besay  ‘become bigger and bigger’
mit ‘small’  mit ka mit  ‘become smaller and smaller’
ting‘i’ ‘high, tall’ ting‘i’ ka ting‘i’  ‘become higher/taller and higher/taller’
ba-jalay ‘ANPAS-road’ bajalay ka bajalay  ‘keep walking and walking’
rari ‘run’  rari ka rari  ‘keep running and running’
N-sabak ‘ACT-cry’ nyabak ka nyabak  ‘keep crying and crying’

5.1.3 The preposition ari

The basic meaning of the preposition ari ‘from’ is to express source, a departing point, from which something comes or is removed. Prepositional phrases with ari may indicate:

a) location:

(5-25) PeN-jawuh ah Balay Sepuak ari Tabu’?
NOM-far ah B S from T
‘Is Balai Sepuak far from Tabuk?’

(5-26) Ku ari Ijuk.
1s from I
‘I am from (the village of) Ijuk.’

(5-27) Lekas kita angkat ari tu’!
fast 1p.incl go from this
‘Let’s quickly go from here!’

(5-28) Baru’ sida’ angkat, ili’ ari ia’.
then 3p go go.downstream from that
‘Then they started off, going downstream from there.’

b) time:

(5-29) Ari masa ia’ agama mulay datay.
from time that religion begin come
‘Since that time religion began to come in.’

(5-30) Ari dulaw sampay ka tu’.
from past.time until to this
‘From former times until now.’

c) a participant, from which the event or action takes place:
Ia N-tapuk diri’ ari bini ia.
3s ACT-hide self from wife 3s
‘He hid himself from his wife.’

Kami tu’ ba-labuh ari Bejit Manay.
1p.excl TOP ANPAS-fall from B M
‘(As for us) we originated from (the ancestor) Bejit Manai.’

d) a substance or entity something is made of or originated from:

peti’ ari buluh aba’ ari kayu
k.o.animal.trap from bamboo and from wood
‘peti’ (made) from bamboo and from wood’

tincin ari mas
ring from gold
‘ring of gold’

jimut ari pulut
k.o.snack from glutinous.rice
‘jimut made of pulut’

din’ing ari kelibak
wall from bark
‘wall made of bark’

Ku ka’ N-kisah sejarah ari kita Mualang.
1s FUT ACT-story history from 1p.incl M
‘I am going to tell the history of us, the Mualang.’

ke-turun ari Am’un Menurun
NOM-descend from A M
‘descendant of Am’un Menurun’

e) an entity compared to which some other entity has a quality to a higher degree (discussed in section 6.1.2):

Sapa urang menua tu’ ti ba-kuasa ari ia?
who person continent this REL ANPAS-power from 3s
‘Who is it in this world that is more powerful than he is?’
Chapter 5: Prepositional Phrases

(5-40)  
Nisi’  tuay ari  ku.  
EXIST.NEG old from 1s  
‘Nobody is older than I am.’

(5-41)  
Sampay dia’=m  gisah, nisi’  lebih  ari  nya’  agi’.  
until  there.near=m  story  EXIST.NEG  more  from  that  again  
‘It’s just until that point that the story goes, it doesn’t go any further 
than that.’

5.1.4 The preposition ntara
The preposition ntara means ‘between, among’, e.g.:

(5-42)  
S-iku’  ntara  sida’  menyadi’  mimpi.  
ONE-CLASS among they siblings dream  
‘One among those siblings dreamt.’

(5-43)  
N-dinga pia’  Aji  Melayu  ntara  dua  peN-pikir.  
ACT-hear like.that haji M between two NOM-think  
‘Hearing this, Haji Melayu was of two opinions.’

(5-44)  
Sedang  aba’  antu  ga’  kita  se-peN-peda’  rumah,  
whereas with ghost also 1p.incl ONE-NOM-see house  
cuma  ntara  pian.  
only between bathing.place  
‘Whereas with the ghosts, we lived close to each other.’ (lit. ‘we were  
of one house sight (we could see each other’s house), only with the  
bathing place in between)

(5-45)  
ntara  lam-lam  sampay  tawas  ari  
between morning-RED until day.time day  
‘between early morning and noon’

5.1.5 The preposition sampay and nyantuk
Both sampay and nyantuk mean ‘until’. Sampay is commonly used, whereas nyantuk  
is seldom found. It is still used mostly by the older generation. Both express location  
and time, e.g.:

(5-46)  
Ia  ba-jalay  ari  Tabu’  nyantuk  Balay  Sepuak.  
3s  ANPAS-road from T until B  S  
‘He walked from Tabuk to Balai Sepuak.’
That’s how the people of Mualang work their rice fields from long ago in the past until the present time.’

Wait for one or as much as two months.’ (Lit. ‘wait for one to two months’)

‘... about 800 meters to 2 kilometers from the village.’

Unlike nyantuk, sampay is also a verb and a conjunction (see 10.4.4). As a main verb it means ‘arrive’, ‘reach’:

‘Arriving at/reaching the fish trap of Haji Melayu ....’

‘When did you arrive here?’

5.2 Non-locative prepositions

5.2.1 The preposition ngaw

The word ngaw by itself can stand alone as a main verb to mean ‘use’:

‘The proverb is still used by people until now.’

‘Because the elders in the past used a backpack.’
Chapter 5: Prepositional Phrases

The preposition ngaw appears to have been derived historically from the use of the verb ngaw in serial verb constructions (see section 10.2). Ngaw also functions as a connective (see 10.4.4). The following prepositional phrases can be distinguished, indicating:

a) Instrument ‘with, by’:

(5-54)  
Nang ba-bunuh ngaw sangkuh! 
don’t ANPAS-kill with spear 
‘Don’t kill each other with spears!’

(5-55)  
Ia pulay ka rumah ngaw tungkat. 
3s go.home to house with stick 
‘He went home with a stick.’

(5-56)  
Baru’ sida’ ili’ ngaw praw. 
then 3p go.downstream with proa 
‘Then they went downstream by proa.’

b) Manner ‘with, by’:

The use of ngaw in this sense is closely related to the previous one, in that in both cases the way the event or action is carried out is expressed, i.e. with an aid (instrument) or in a particular manner, e.g.:

(5-57)  
Jaku’ ia ngaw suara ba-getar. 
say 3s with voice ANPAS-tremble 
‘He spoke with a trembling voice.’

(5-58)  
Ia N-lumpat ngaw kaki se-piak. 
3s ACT-jump with foot ONE-part 
‘He jumped on one foot.’

(5-59)  
Ia angkat ngaw nyamay. 
3s go with comfortable 
‘He went happily.’

(5-60)  
M’ih alah ba-kerja (ngaw) bayik. 
2s.masc must ANPAS-work (with) good 
‘You must work well.’

The use of ngaw to mark manner is optional in some cases, as in (5-60). An explanation of this case will be provided in Chapter 8 (subsection 8.4.4.1) in relation to other types of adverbial constructions found in the language.

c) Purpose ‘for, to be used (as)’:
A Grammar of Mualang

(5-61) Asa pia’ ku bay’ pulay ngaw rempah da rumah.
if like.that 1s bring go.home for side.dish LOC house
‘If so, I will take it home for a sidedish at home.’

(5-62) Bini m’ih naday ngaw kuli.
wife 2s.masc NEG for coolie
‘Your wife is not to be (treated as) a coolie.’

d) Benefactive ‘for (the benefit of)’:

(5-63) Baru’ asa aday tan’a pia’, baru’ dia’ lah
then if exist sign like.that then there.near lah
uma ku ngaw tawun tu’.
rice.field 1s for year this
‘Then if such a sign exists, then that is where my rice field will be for this year.’

(5-64) Lagu tu’ ngaw keban bala peN-dinga.
song this for all.kinds all NOM-hear
‘This song is for all kinds of listeners.’

(5-65) Ngaw Bujang Jat tu’ ku beri’ ka buah kemayaw.
for TOA Bad TOP 1s give to fruit k.o.fruit
‘As for Brother Baddie, I’d give (him) a kemayaw fruit.’

(5-66) Tu’ ngaw m’ih.
this for 2s.masc
‘This is for you.’

5.2.2 The preposition aba’
As with ngaw, the preposition aba’ ‘with’ is also derived from a lexical verb, namely aba’ ‘follow’ presented in the following examples:

(5-67) Buh, tua aba’ wrang gaway!
come.on 1d.incl follow person feast
‘Let’s join the people for the feast!’

(5-68) Ngapa naday aba’?
why NEG follow
‘Why didn’t you follow (them)?’

(5-69) Ku aba’ m’ih.
1s follow/with 2s.masc
‘I will follow you’ or ‘You and I.’
Chapter 5: Prepositional Phrases

Note that in (5-69) aba’ exhibits ambiguity as to whether it is a verb or a conjunction. The latter is yet another function to be described later in Chapter 10 (subsection 10.6.1.1).

As a preposition, aba’ has an associative or comitative function, as in (5-70) through (5-72):

(5-70)  

3s stay with grandmother 3s
‘She stayed with her grandmother.’

(5-71)  

Those people did not mix with other people.’

(5-72)  

‘Uh, everything is just so hard with you!’

Unlike Malay/Indonesian or English, for example, Mualang makes a clear distinction between the prepositions with instrumental vs. associative (or comitative) functions, that is, between ngaw and aba’, respectively. The possible semantic development of both verbs can be schematized as follows:

(5-73)  

a. ngaw: ‘use’ – instrument – manner – benefactive (to be used for) – purposive (to be used as)

b. aba’: ‘follow’ – associative – inclusion

The functions most closely related semantically are those of instrument and associative:

- instrumental ngaw heads an inanimate and non-human NP, by use of which the event or action is carried out;
- associative aba’ heads an animate (human/non-human) NP, as an accompaniment to the subject/agent, as in (5-70 – 5-72), or in idup aba’ ‘live with’, pakay aba’ ‘eat with’, datay aba’ ‘come with’. Accompaniment includes a party in reciprocal actions, e.g. ba-perang aba’ (ANPAS-war) ‘wage a war with’, ba-bintih aba’ (ANPAS-fight.with.shinbone) ‘fight with shinbone (a kind of game) with’, ba-sium aba’ (ANPAS-kiss) ‘engage in kissing with’, ba-laya’ aba’ (ANPAS-quarrel) ‘have a quarrel with’.

With such fine distinctions, verbs that are able to take more than one preposition can be clearly contrasted by means of the subtle differences between their PP constituents, e.g. as with padah ‘say’:

(5-74)  

‘say (it) for me/on my behalf’
‘say (it) with me’
‘say (it) to me’
In Malay/Indonesian the semantic functions of instrument, manner and associative are all covered with the preposition *dengan* ‘with’, which is historically related to *ngaw*. It is perhaps due to the influence of Malay/Indonesian that some Mualang speakers have started to mix up the use of prepositions in a case such as (5-74). For example, *ngaw* is used instead of the allative *ka* in (5-75 – 5-77), and of the associative *aba’* in (5-78):

(5-75)  
\[ \text{Antu tu’ mulai pedih ati ngaw kita.} \]
\[ \text{ghost TOP begin sick liver with 1p.incl} \]
\[ \text{‘The ghosts began to get irritated with us.’} \]

(5-76)  
\[ \text{N-peda’ pia’ ba-tanya’ ulih sedua ngaw petara Senta.} \]
\[ \text{ACT-see like.that ANPAS-ask ulih 3d with god S} \]
\[ \text{‘Seeing this, both of them questioned god Senta.’} \]

(5-77)  
\[ \text{Padahal ku tu’ mpu kuasa ngaw tanah-ampah tu’.} \]
\[ \text{in.contrast 1s TOP have power with land-PREC this} \]
\[ \text{‘Contrary to this, I am the one who has the authority over the lands and everything on them.’} \]

(5-78)  
\[ \text{Nema kita naday cucuk ngaw sida’ ia’.} \]
\[ \text{because 1p.incl. NEG fit with 3p that} \]
\[ \text{‘Because we did not go along with them (those people).’} \]

Note that *aba’* also functions as an inclusive conjunction that operates both at the phrase and clause level as in (5-79 and 5-80) (see Chapter 10):

(5-79)  
\[ \text{Udah temu cara aba’ akal ….} \]
\[ \text{after find way and trick} \]
\[ \text{‘After having found some method and trick ….’} \]

(5-80)  
\[ \text{Ukay aba’ nyawung ti da-bunuh ….} \]
\[ \text{dog and cat REL PASS-kill} \]
\[ \text{‘The dog and cat that were killed ….’} \]

5.2.3  The preposition *ulih*

As a verb base, the word *ulih* means ‘get, gotten’, as in the following examples:

(5-81)  
\[ \text{Ikan ti ulih bubu rari.} \]
\[ \text{fish REL gotten k.o.fish.trap run} \]
\[ \text{‘The fish that was gotten by the bubu trap ran away.’} \]
Chapter 5: Prepositional Phrases

(5-82)  *N-gali*  
  
  *angkis*  
  
  *d=alam*  
  
  *tubang, angkis*  
  
  ACT-dig  
  
  k.o.porcupine  
  
  LOC=inside  
  
  hole  
  
  k.o.porcupine  
  
  *ulih, ari pun malam.*  
  
  get  
  
  day pun  
  
  night  
  
  ‘Digging in the hole for a porcupine, (when) getting the porcupine, the day turns night.’ [a riddle]

(5-83)  *Urang aday b-ulih babi.*  
  
  person  
  
  exist  
  
  ANPAS-get  
  
  pig  
  
  ‘People did get pigs (from hunting).’

As a preposition, *ulih* means ‘by’ to mark an agent phrase in a passive construction (5-84 – 5-85) or it means ‘because of’ to mark a causer in clauses with a stative verb, in which the causer is said to be responsible for the event (5-86 – 5-87):

(5-84)  *Tu’ da-bay’ ulih dua urang.*  
  
  this  
  
  PASS-bring by  
  
  two person  
  
  ‘This was brought by two people.’

(5-85)  *Asa pia’, tiki’ ulih m’ih!*  
  
  if  
  
  like.that  
  
  climb by  
  
  2s.masc  
  
  ‘If so, you climb it (the tree)!’

(5-86)  *Nyawa ia penuh ulih pipit ti da-pakay ia.*  
  
  mouth  
  
  3s full by  
  
  sparrow  
  
  REL PASS-eat  
  
  3s  
  
  ‘His mouth was full of the sparrows he was eating.’

(5-87)  *Asa pia’, naday nyamay kita’ ulih ku.*  
  
  if  
  
  like.that  
  
  NEG comfortable  
  
  2p by  
  
  1s  
  
  ‘If so, you all do not feel comfortable because of me.’

5.2.4 The preposition *upa*

Besides being used at the clause level (see 10.4.3 in Chapter 10), the preposition *upa* ‘like, such as’ functions also at the phrase level:

(5-88)  *Burung naday mawa upa m’ih tu’.*  
  
  bird  
  
  NEG stupid as  
  
  2s.masc  
  
  this  
  
  ‘The bird is not stupid like you here.’

(5-89)  *Sedua idup upa urang menyadi’.*  
  
  3d  
  
  live like  
  
  person  
  
  sibling  
  
  ‘They two lived like siblings.’
There are still many other things that are planted there such as cassava, spinach, cucumber, corn …

5.2.5 The preposition *nuna’*

As a verbal base, *tuna’* means ‘follow’, e.g.:

(5-91) *Ia ka’ N-tuna’ Dara Jantung cara idup bayik.*

3s want ACT-follow D J way live good

‘She wanted to follow Dara Jantung in living well.’

(5-92) *Tuna’ apa ti ku padah!*

follow what REL 1s say

‘Follow what I’ve said!’

In the preposition, *nuna’* ‘according to’ the inflected verbal form is lexicalized. E.g.:

(5-93) *Aday ga’ pentik⁵ da-pulah nuna’ pe-mayuh urang se-bilik.*

exist also small.wooden.statue PASS-make according.to NOM-many person ONE-house

‘It happened also that pentik were made according to the number of people of the whole household.’

(5-94) *Sida’ angkat ari nya’ nuna’ dany’i se-mula.*

3p go from that according.to promise ONE-beginning

‘They went from there according to the original promise.’

(5-95) *Nuna’ tusuy urang tuay kelia’ ah, ....*

according.to story person old past.time ah ....

‘According to the very story told by the old people in the past, ….’

When following a main verb as in (5-93 – 5-94), the use of *nuna’* is ambiguous as to whether it is a verb or a preposition. However, as a preposition the verbal meaning is reduced. Thus, in (5-94), for example, the people did not go literally following the instructions already stated in the promise, but rather they had to proceed based on the promised statement.

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⁵ *Pentik* is a small wooden statue made for magic or ritual purposes.
The word nurut is also heard in addition to the preposition nuna’, with the same meaning. However, it is difficult to decide whether it is a Mualang word or a Malay/Indonesian borrowing.³

5.2.6 The preposition ngusung
The word ngusung is derived from N- + gusung ‘meet, catch up with’. The use of gusung as a main verb is illustrated in the examples below:

(5-96)  
\[ Ku \ ka' \ pulay \ ka \ kampung \ kami \ agi', \ ka' \]
\[ 1s \ want \ go.home \ to \ village \ lp.excl \ again \ want \]
\[ N-gusung \ anak-bini \ ku. \]
\[ ACT-meet \ child-wife \ 1s \]
\[ 'I am going back again to our village, I want to meet my family (lit. my wife (and) child).’ \]

(5-97)  
\[ Ila' \ ku \ N-gusung \ m'ih. \]
\[ later \ 1s \ ACT-meet \ 2s.masc \]
\[ 'I’ll meet/catch up with you later.’ \]

In a serial verb construction, gusung usually follows motion verbs such as datay ‘come’, pulay ‘go home’, ba-ran’aw ‘have a visit, chat’, temuay ‘have a visit’, any’ung ‘escort’, for example as in (5-98 – 5-100):

(5-98)  
\[ ...isa' \ antu \ nitaw' \ N-tiki' \ N-gusung \ ia. \]
\[ so.that \ ghost \ cannot \ ACT-climb \ ACT-meet \ 3s \]
\[ ‘... so that the ghost could not climb up to get him.’ \]

(5-99)  
\[ Ia \ N-temuay \ N-gusung \ apay-inay. \]
\[ 3s \ ACT-visit \ ACT-meet \ father-mother \]
\[ ‘He visited his parent.’ \]

(5-100)  
\[ Ba-ran'aw \ N-gusung \ Bujang \ Jat \ agi’ \ da \ studiu. \]
\[ ANPAS-PREC \ ACT-meet \ TOA \ bad \ again \ LOC \ studio \]
\[ ‘Have a visit again with Brother Baddie at the (broadcasting) studio.’ \]

In serial verb constructions, the verbal meaning of N-gusung appears to be reduced, as seen, at least, in the English translations of (5-98 – 5-100). Yet its status as a preposition in these examples is doubtful. However, I have thus far found the following examples where its “true” prepositional use seems to be quite apparent:⁴

³ Cf. Malay/Indonesian verbal root turut ‘follow’ and the derived preposition menurut ‘according to’.
⁴ The examples were obtained from a story written by an informant from the village of Sungai Antu in the Upstream area. He is in his fifties and has been away from his village of origin for many years.
(5-101) Kita’ arus N-pinta’ ngusung ku dulaw.
2p must ACT-ask.for unto 1s first
‘You must ask for it from me first.’

(5-102) Ba-tanya’ sedua agi’ ngusung Petara Senta nya’....
ANPAS-ask 2d again unto deity S that
‘Both of them asked again of the god Senta …’

(5-103) Mayuh basa adat tay da-ajar ngusung kita.
much norms custom REL PASS-teach unto 1p.icnl
‘Many were the norms and customs that were taught to us.’

Note that the original inflectional N-gusung is already reduced functionally to the prepositional ngusung in (5-101 – 5-103). In (5-101) traces of a serial verb construction are still apparent, in (5-102) and (5-103) this is no longer the case, since there is no subject coreferentiality between the main verbs and the following ngusung (if interpreted as a verb), which is the prerequisite for a serial verb construction (see section 10.2).

5.3 Complex prepositional phrases

Some prepositions can be used in combination with other prepositions, yielding phrases of the structure PREP PREP NP. Prepositions can also be combined with a locative noun, yielding phrases of the shape PREP N_loc (NP), in which NP is optional. The locative noun and the following NP exhibit a “possessive” relationship, the N_loc indicating a part of the referent of the headed NP.

a) The structure PREP PREP is attested in da ntara ‘in between/among’ (5-104), arī ntara ‘(from) among/between’ (5-105) and sampay ka ‘up until’ (5-106 – 5-107):

(5-104) Nyaw ke-lama’ aday dih da ntara urang
after NOM-long exist dih LOC among/between person

tay N-padah ....
REL ACT-say
‘After a long time, there was (someone) among the people who said ....’

(5-105) Baru’ s-iku’ (ari) ntara sida’ menyadi’
then ONE-CLASS from among/between 3p sibling

tay N-am’i’ ....
REL ACT-take
‘Then there was one (from) among the siblings who took ....’
Ba-pinta’ kita Mualang tu’ sampay ka tengah
ANPAS-ask lp.incl M this until to middle

malam. Naday putus malam sampay ka ari pagi.
night NEG broken night until to day tomorrow
‘As for us, the Mualang, making a marriage proposal is done until the
middle of the night. If no decision is made that night, it continues until
the following morning.’

Baru’ ntawa’ tu’ tadi’, kisah tih, da-tikam
then k.o.fruit this a.while.ago story tih PASS-throw
ari pucuk ntawa’ sampay ka gang’ang.
from point k.o.tree until to balcony
‘Then the ntawa’ fruit (mentioned a while ago), the story goes, was
thrown from the top of the ntawa’ tree to the balcony.’

Notice that in (5-105), ari is optional. As for sampay, it may appear without
the preposition ka such as in (5-48) and (5-49). Without ka, that is sampay X, it indicates
the presence of the event in a spatial or temporal span of which X is the final border;
whereas with ka the indication is that the event reaches its termination at X. Thus, in
(5-107), for example, the absence of ka yields an ungrammatical sentence since the
event tikam ‘throw’ cannot last in the spatial span. Rather it is the object, the
ntawa’ fruit that passes the span and reaches the end point. Stative and process verbs, then,
are the most likely to be used with sampay without ka.

b) A complex prepositional phrase of the structure PREP N(NP) consists of the
preposition da, ka, or ari and a locative noun followed optionally by a noun phrase.
The locative noun refers to a part of an entity, among which the body. Examples are
ataw ‘top, upper part/side’, baruh ‘bottom or lower part/side’ (also ‘low’; ‘short’),
luar ‘outside’, alam ‘inside’, mua ‘face, front part/side’, belakang ‘back (of body),
back part/side’, tisi ‘side (part),’ tengah ‘middle, center part’, ili’ ‘downstream
part’, ulu ‘upstream part’. The construction specifies the location or movement of an
entity or activity vis-à-vis the specific part of another entity. The following examples
illustrate their use:

Ia N-tiki’ ka ataw padang.
3s ACT-climb to upper.part attic
‘He climbed up to the attic.’

5 Gang’ang is an unroofed open part of a house, spacious enough for household actitivites
such as drying things (rice, etc.).
6 Beside tisi, sisi is often heard as well, but the latter is clearly Malay/Indonesian (see Chapter
2). Cf. also tusu ~ susu ‘breast, milk’. Forms like tisi are mostly produced by persons of the
ever generation.
7 The prepositions da and ka may undergo cliticization, see section 2.5.6.
Da-simpan da baruh tikay peN-tin’uk ....
‘(It) was kept under the sleeping mat ....’

Ili’ and ulu are commonly used with the name of a river:

da ili’/ulu Belitang
‘at the downstream/upstream part of the Belitang River’

The complex prepositions da alam ‘in(side)’ and da ataw ‘above, on top of’ may be reduced to alam and ataw, respectively:

Upa tih aday nsia alam nya’.
‘Apparently there was a person inside of it.’

Aday buah ntawa’ ataw nyin.
‘There’s a ntawa’ fruit up there.’

Another more complex structure is the double preposition sampay ka followed by a locative noun, as in (5-106) above and (5-113) below:

Ari dan sampay ka baruh da-bingkis kulit
‘The bark (of the tree) was peeled off from the branches until down
under so that it was slippery.’

This latter sentence is also an example of a Nloc which is not followed by a NP.

8 The complex preposition da dalam ‘in(side)’ is also heard. This is probably a case of influence from Malay/Indonesian, where the equivalent is di dalam.