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## Linguistic and Cultural Times Running in Oceania and Southeast Asia

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## Linguistic and Cultural Times Running in Oceania and Southeast Asia

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### Introduction

Seeing the subject 'Time and Language' from the viewpoint of general linguistics, languages (sound languages) are to be performed and articulated along a temporal axis, as is said '*linéarité*' of linguistic sign by F. de Saussure, they connote temporal attributes in themselves. In other words, when time is considered as an internal component of linguistic structures, it can be said that a feature such as syntactic or syntagmatic relations in opposition to paradigmatic relations of a language is to be established on the temporal attributes. However, as was pointed out by Y. Nagano, the symposium organizer, we aim at reviewing speech (*langage*) from a social scientific point of view. It means that we are to discuss how lexical and grammatical categories of time as seen in speech are related to human experiences or human cultures.

By applying for the semiotic triangle of C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards (Figure 1), I examine Nagano's proposal. If concept or cognition of time (b) is confined in how to be expressed by speech (a), it concerns merely the 'speech of time.' Then it does not go beyond the scope of internal linguistics. However, even if we end up with a meta-linguistic explanation on the time-concerned existences of cultural items (c) such as nature, livelihood, rituals, myths and so forth, we merely contribute an ethnographical (anthropological) description, but do make nothing at all for (a). Adam's 'Perceptions of Time' speaks mainly on (b) and (c).

According to linguistic anthropology, the theme of 'time and language'

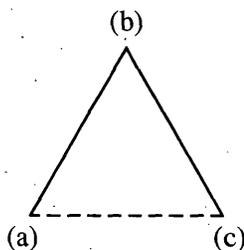


Figure 1

pursues to discuss the relationships between (c) and languages, particularly between (c) and linguistic forms. For instance, a theory of interpreting time in a confrontation between 'sacred' and 'profane' was proposed by Leach as an example of temporal concept for (c). Hall differentiated doing many things at once 'polychronic,' and doing one thing at a time 'monochronic,' which vary from culture to culture (1983:46). It is required to consider how these concepts are correlated with linguistic expressions, or whether they are correlated at all.

### 1. Linguistic (Grammatical) Time

There are two ways to linguistically manifest temporal concepts. They are 'tense' and 'aspect.' The former is indirect, conceptual (logical), abstract and mathematical, whereas the latter is direct, sensory (emotional), specific and quantitative. Aspect is a more fundamental phenomenon than tense, in that it refers directly to whether the process under one's eyes has been completed or not (Izui 1967:85).

While there is a fairly large number of grammatically tenseless languages in the world, none of them fail to possess aspect (including *Aktionsart*) in a wide sense at least. It becomes clear, when we look into the prehistoric development of Indo-European, that what was marked overtly from the beginning was aspect, and that the conceptual steps of time were born afterwards as a secondary consequence of aspectual distinctions (Comrie, 1976:83). Aspect is a fundamental concept which is associated with verbs. J. Kuryłowicz, an Indo-European comparative linguist, says, the article is a fundamental concept to nouns as aspect is to verbs.

On the other hand, however, as is proposed by Izui, tense and aspect which are grammatically distinguished can be also considered as an incessant continuum. From this viewpoint, the concept of tense such as future, present and past is not a simple differentiation of temporal grades, but forms a continuum of *dynamis* 'dynamic,' *energeia* 'energy' and *ergon* 'work.' Tense is a live evolution developing and centering around *energeia*. So far, speech is primarily performed as energetic and vital activities.

We can find an example of most simple conceptualization of time in terms of relationship between man and nature in Kapauku (Papuan, Irian Jaya, Indonesia), who recognize only two seasons, namely *idi uwaa* 'a period of rain' and *awii uwaa* 'a period of dry weather.' However, these Kapauku concepts refer to irregular periods occurring at any time during the year (Pospisil 1963:159). The Galela (Papuan, Halmahera Island, Indonesia) also have a distinction between two seasons, one being the season of the south wind (*o musung o kore sara*) and the other the season of the north wind (*o musung o kore mie*). They also have six months in the latter, which obviously came to be defined as a new concept along with the period of rice cultivation (Yoshida 1980:92-95). There are no people in the world who do not have a general idea of time. In this sense, one could comfortably argue that the concept of time is, like aspect in language, the most

fundamental phenomenon in human cultures.

On the other hand, it is doubtful if the concept of time exists in complete isolation from the internal structure of language. Aspect which is directly associated with the temporal attributes of a situation manifests itself as a lexical meaning of verbs, and thus enables us to classify verbs. What is famous along this line of analysis is *shibun-setsu* (four-classified theory): status, continuity, moment and the fourth class, which was proposed by Kindaichi (1954:27-61) as well as Vendler (1967). Comrie called a semantic aspect of verb 'inherent meaning,' thereby distinguishing it from aspect in its genuine sense (1976:41-51).

The Hesperonesian (or Indonesian) languages of the Austronesian family are characterized by an agglutinative type of language which has elaborate devices of affixation. In Bahasa Indonesia, among the most basic prefixes attached to verb stems are *tər-*, *mə-*, *bər-* and  $\emptyset$ -form (affixless form), whose internal functions are to construct an opposed system including the concept of time.

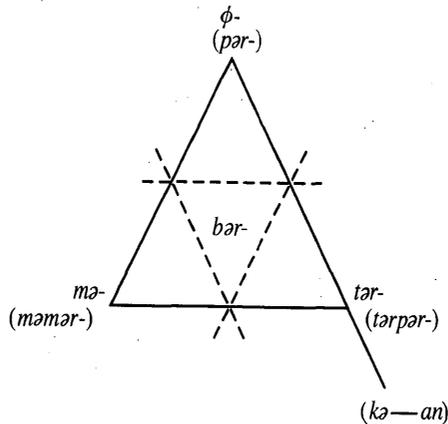


Figure 2

As is shown in Figure 2,  $\emptyset$ - and *tər-* do not take an object, whereas *mə-* does. *Mə-* and *tər-* construct an assertive sentence, whereas  $\emptyset$ - makes an imperative sentence.  $\emptyset$ - and *mə-* do not bear any feature referring to time, whereas *tər-* does. As is clear in the figure, the distinctive features of these three affixes can be shown in a triangular opposition. *Pər-* by itself with an emphatic function appears as complex prefixes: *pər-*, *məmpər-*, and *tə(r)pər-*, respectively. I argue that these three indices have grammatical features such as 'voice,' 'sentence' and 'time,' respectively. *Kə-an* is located along an extension of *tər-*. Because *bər-* has a feature of middle voice and is used for an assertive sentence, describing a temporal relationship, it is positioned in the midst of three prefixes. The following are the examples:

$\emptyset$ -: *Ia tutup pintu itu.* 'He closes, the door'

It should be noted that, grammatically speaking, this sentence is not equivalent

to 'He closes the door.'

*Pintu itu ia tutup.* 'The door, he closes'

*Tutup pintu itu.* 'Close the door.'

*mə-: Ia mənutup pintu itu.* 'He closes the door.'

*tər-: Pintu itu tørtutup.* 'The door was suddenly shut with a bang.'

*bər-: cangkir børtutup* 'a glass with lid'

Although, in Bahasa Indonesia, neither *Ø-* nor *mə-* express time in particular, one can judge 'temporalité' of a sentence dependent on the context. On the other hand, *tər-* indicates that an action is done accidentally, unintentionally, or without the agent's knowing, and involves the concept of time or aspect.

## 2. Realistic Time

For a certain Melanesian of New Caledonia, the notion of time and being are indistinguishable, therefore, he often refuses to tell a legend when he has forgotten topographical names or the time is not right for telling it. It is because he is situated in a 'spacio-temporal' domain (Leenhardt 1979:83-91). This actually endorses a point made by J. Kawada in his presentation that tense and aspect which appeared in the mythical period were focused on a story teller's time. Time in *energeia* induces a symmetric cognition.

*Saki* in Japanese refers to times both in future and past. Likewise, in the Nez Perce language (Idaho, Oregon, Washington), there are a few expressions which are used to describe a pair of times into both directions, namely, future and past. They are adverbs which can mean both 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow,' 'the day before yesterday' and 'the day after tomorrow,' 'last year' and 'next year,' or 'long time ago' and 'in the long future' (Aoki 1976). Similar cases are found in English too, in the way of combining some adjectives, such as 'grand-' for the second generation, 'great-grand-' for the third and 'great-great-grand-' for the fourth. There is Proto-Austronesian \**əmpu* (or \**ninih*) which means both 'GrPa' and 'GrCh' (Wurm and Wilson 1975).

Although not presented in an exact symmetry to what has been described in the above, teknonymy which is being seen in the Balinese society (Indonesia) and explained as underscoring the importance of the marital pair which contributes to the social regeneration (Geertz 1973:375-379), is nothing but a representation of a cognition of *energeia*.

According to Cassirer, at the first stage of the development from the feeling to the concept of time, the consciousness is dominated by the opposition of 'now' and 'not-now,' the former being illuminated by the light of the 'present,' whereas the latter remaining in a dark sphere (1953:217-218), The speaker generates the primitive cognition of the present from intuitive expression based on such differences as now and not-now, not from the grammatical criterion of the present tense.

In the Kwesten language (Papuan, Irian Jaya, Indonesia), the tense suffixes attached to the stem of verbs can indicate a few different temporal steps, and they appear in a symmetrical way for past and future. The following exemplifies the variations of a verb stem *kwa-* 'go.' A nominative ending of the personal pronoun *ana-* 'I' does not appear in symmetry, as in *-s* (indefinite, past), *-n* (future), or *-Ø* (present, imperative).

<i>ana-s kwa-san</i>	(indefinite past)
<i>ana-s kwa-r</i>	(remote past)
<i>ana-s kwa-nan = kwa-n</i>	(intermediate past)
<i>ana-s kwa-nant</i>	(near past)
<i>ana-s kwa-nt</i>	(nearest past)
<i>ana-s kwa-t</i>	(extremely nearest past)
<i>ana-Ø kwa-Ø</i>	(indefinite, imperative)
<i>ana-Ø kwa-nan = kwa-n</i>	(present)
<i>ana-n kwa-t</i>	(extremely nearest future)
<i>ana-n kwa-nt</i>	(nearest future)
<i>ana-n kwa-nant</i>	(near future)
<i>ana-s kwa-fan</i>	(indefinite future)

### 3. From Space to Time

With regard to grammatical times, we can observe the phenomenon that a spatial difference is reflected in a grammatical expression of tense in the Klamath language (Oregon, the United States), where two tense-suffixes are originally locative (Gatschet 1890:402, 434). As is evidenced in this particular case, there are quite a few examples of language in which a spatial recognition such as location, direction, wind direction and so on, is transposed into a temporal recognition. That space makes a superconcept over time is not irrelevant to that space is located in a visible (intuitively-recognizable) motorial sphere. The Nuaulu (Seram Island, Indonesia) have only one term to express distance, i.e. the one which is equivalent to 'a pace,' and short periods of time are simply measured by time divisions determined by the position of the sun, the moon and the stars at night (Ellen 1978:133-134). However, the language which has 'the pheric distance' system seems to belong to the minority.

In Fijian in Melanesia, there are a few demonstrative pronouns such as *ongoo*. This term refers to space which is near the speaker, whereas *ongori* designates space near the person spoken to. Further, *koyaa* (or *oyaa*) indicates space which is distant from both the speaker and the person addressed. These pronouns can be used also as particles to indicate the 'present tense,' 'near past' and 'remote past,' respectively. For instance, *E ra lako ongoo*, which involves the word for 'present tense,' means that 'They are to set off very soon.'

What is important here is that a status in space can be transferred into

cognition of time. Not only in English, but in many other languages, we can observe phenomenon that verbs equivalent to 'be' or 'have' are often used as auxiliary verbs to make a progressive form. For example, in Japanese, *aru* or *iru* is the counterpart to 'be' in English. The former indicates that something is in a certain state with a conjugated form *-te aru*, whereas the latter an action in progress or continuation with a form of *-te iru*.

The concepts of 'old' and 'new' can be used to express time in some languages. For instance, in Bahasa Indonesia, *baru* is 'new' and *lama* is 'old.' The former refers to the near past, as 'just' in English, while the latter indicates continuity. The following are specific examples:

*Saya baru makan.* 'I have just eaten.'

*Sudah lama saya tidak makan.* 'I have not eaten for a long time.'

Furthermore, the words *panjang* 'long' and *pendek* 'short' can apply to both space and time, which is a phenomenon found in the Japanese language as well. In contrast, in Fijian, although people use two different words for 'long,' namely, *mbalavu* for a long distance and *ndendee* for a long period of time, there is no such distinction in the word for 'short' between distance and time. In both cases, *leka* is applied to mean 'short.'

Exactly the same phenomenon can be seen in Samoan in Polynesia too, where there is a distinction for the word 'long' between a case referring to long time *leva-leva* and a case to indicate long distance *'umi*. However, there is no difference in the term for 'short' (*pu 'u*). Based on these observations of Oceanic characteristics, one can conjecture that human languages do not necessarily have a uniform parallelism between spatial and temporal recognitions, and that the two types of recognition are not always in symmetry.

#### 4. Deixis of Time

In many languages, there is a commonly established phenomenon that a verb 'go' is used as an auxiliary-like verb to express the near future. The following exemplify such a case:

*I'm going to see him.*

*Je vais le voir.*

What is worth noting is that *venir* 'come' in French is used to express the near past, as is shown in the sentence *Il vient de partir*. It is not a particularly common phenomenon in other languages, however. Rather, as exemplified in 'coming' in English, *mən-datang* in Bahasa Indonesia and *kitaru* in Japanese, they tend to refer to the near future. But, the problem is that one cannot always argue a simple symmetry, because 'come' presupposes motion toward the speaker, and 'go'

motion away from the speaker, the former gives rise mostly 'past,' and the latter mostly to 'future,' respectively (Givón 1973:917-918).

The future is a mere notion associated with desire, will, obligation, and emotion (Gonda 1954:248), as 'will' in English is used to make a future tense as well as a noun. On the other hand, there are cases in which particles (prepositions) to indicate directions are applied to indicate the future. For example, *per* 'for' in Italian as in *Sta per mangiare* 'He is going to eat' has the same function with *akan* in Bahasa Indonesia as in *Ia akan makan* 'He will eat later.' *Akan* is a preposition to bring in (involve) an object as in *Ia lupa akan janjinya* 'He forgot about his promise.' We can find such an usage of preposition in the Chamorro language in Micronesia as in *Ha fa para un bida* 'What will you do?' *Para* here is etymologically a borrowing from Spanish *para* (same etymon as Italian *per*). This evidences that the deep language contact has took place to such an extent that the Spanish preposition acquired a grammatical function in Chamorro.

All these linguistic expressions support the theory that the concept of time is closely related to deixis in the process of cognition. The problem is, however, that even 'front' and 'back' do not necessarily make a symmetry semantically. It is because time is often considered to move forward. Even time itself can go fast, or slow. We can call this as 'moving-time' as opposed to the 'moving-ego' (Traugott 1975:217).

The moving ego can appear in Japanese together with words such as *saki* 'forward,' *mae* 'front' and *ushiro*, or *ato* 'back.' *Saki* is used in phrases such as *sū-shūkan-saki* 'in a few weeks,' *o-saki-makkura* 'The future is all dark,' or *issun-saki-wa-yami* 'Nobody knows what may happen tomorrow.' As is clear in these examples, *saki* implies a somewhat unrealistic (*irrealis*) future. On the other hand, *saki* also can mean the moving time, as shown in examples such as *saki-datsu* 'previous,' or *saki-ototoi* 'two days before yesterday.' In these cases, *saki* points to the past. N. Furuhashi's presentation has shown the same phenomenon found in the ancient Japanese literature. When *mae* is used as the moving ego, it bears a positive meaning, which is seen in phrases such as *mae-geiki* 'promising prospect,' *mae-daoshi* 'to advance forward,' *mae-muki* 'forward-looking,' or *mae-motte* 'in advance.' In contrast, *ushiro* or *ato* carries a somewhat negative sense as is shown in *ushiro-metai* 'to feel guilty,' *ushiro-yubi* 'to be scorned,' *ushiro-gami* 'lit. back hair, to feel as if one's heart were behind,' or *ato-no-matsuri* 'to be too late now.' One could argue that the opposition is related to the contrast that everything in front (*mae*) is visible and everything behind (*ushiro*) it is not (Traugott 1978:378).

With regard to the moving time, we have phrases such as *sūfun-ato* 'after a few minutes,' or *sūfun-mae* 'a few minutes before.' From these examples we can suppose that if time had a face, time would flow with his face turned to the speaker. In Bahasa Indonesia, *dapan* corresponds to *mae*, while *bolakang* to *ato*. The moving time comes out in *bolakang* as 'later.' It also makes a compound word with *-an* (a suffix referring to a collection or group), namely, *bolakang-an*, 'finally, lately, recently,' which implies both directions of past and future centering round

the speaker's reality, i.e. the above *energeia*. The moving ego in Bahasa Indonesia appears in expressions such as *minggu depan* or *minggu muka* 'next week' (*muka* 'face'), or *tər-(kə)bəlakang* 'to be placed behind, to be left behind.' However, '5 minutes later' is said *dalam 5 mənit* 'lit. within 5 minutes,' whereas '5 minutes ago' is *5 mənit yang lalu* 'lit. 5 minutes which have passed.'

## 5. Time in the Austronesian

In this chapter my effort will be made to inspect how cultural times to be formed at the lexical level, especially among the Austronesian examples such as seen in 1) vocabularies expressing time, 2) semantic change with a newly acquired meaning, and 3) regional vocabularies appeared according to differences in natural environments.

### 5.1 Day, Sun and Night

Cultural times which are recognized at the lexical or semantic level, as was pointed out by Nilsson's classical book (1920), are generally based on time phenomena of the heavens such as the sun, moon, stars, and the phases of nature such as variations of climate, plant and animal life. The Biak (Irian Jaya, Indonesia) know the solar calendar and define March 21, i.e. Vernal Equinox Day as the beginning of a new year, when the sun rises precisely in the east. This is, however, a rather unusual case among the Austronesians, where people hardly take the sun as an index for time reckoning.

As seen in *mata-hari* 'sun, lit. eye of day' in Bahasa Indonesia, or *srəngéngé* 'sun,' etymologically coming from *sang hyang wé* 'major divinity of day' in Javanese, the term 'sun' are secondarily derived from *hari* 'day,' or *wai* or *wé* 'day,' the latter appearing as a compound *udan wé-wé* 'rain while the sun is shining.' In Fijian also 'sun' is named *mata-ni-singa* 'eye of day.' Next are some other examples:

Ilokano (Luzon, the Philippines)	<i>adlaw</i> 'day': <i>init</i> 'sun'
Bontok (Luzon, the Philippines)	<i>algew</i> 'day': <i>init</i> 'to heat, sun'
Tiruray (Mindanao, the Philippines)	<i>fuweh</i> 'to open, day': <i>teresang</i> 'sun': <i>ge-kayang</i> '(sun) well above the horizon'
Ulithian (Micronesia)	<i>ráál</i> 'day': <i>yaal</i> 'sun'
Samoan (Polynesia)	<i>aso</i> 'day': <i>laa</i> 'sun' (<Proto-Polynesian * <i>laqa(a)</i> )

As seen in the above examples, the origins of words for the sun and the day are not identical in the Austronesian. In Proto-Austronesian, there is a concept of daytime as opposed to that of night. The former is reconstructed as \**ha(n)daw* (~\**qa(N)jaw*), and the latter \**bəngi*. There is, however, no term to represent one whole day, or a whole day and night. Generally speaking, a day starts with the sunset among the Austronesians. For example, *malam minggu* 'Sunday night' in

Bahasa Indonesia is equivalent to *do-yō-no-yoru* 'Saturday night' in Japanese or English. In Samoan, *poo* 'night' coming from *\*bāngi* through Proto-Polynesian *\*poo* means also 'a day,' and a compound *ona-poo* (*ona* 'his') becomes 'times,' or 'period.'

## 5.2 Rice Year

As for the conceptualization of seasons, as was discussed on cases of the Nuer (Evans-Pritchard 1940:154–160), the recognition is often determined by routine diurnal activities such as livelihood, feasts, rituals and so forth, rather than by climatic changes.

This same trend is observable in the process of reckoning time in the Austronesian as well. A term *\*taqun* (~*\*tahun*) in Proto-Austronesian is given a meaning such as 'season' and 'year,' etc. Further, its derivative *\*nahun* (with a stem prenasalized) means 'time' (Wurm and Wilson 1975). In Indonesian languages, *\*taqun* spreads over as *tahun* ~ *taun* in Bahasa Indonesia, *taon* in Tagalog (the Philippines), and *taona* in Merina (Madagascar) with a meaning of 'profane year.' On the other hand, in Oceania where rice cultivation could not be introduced, there appears a semantic change as is seen in a Fijian compound *ndausinga* 'famine, lit. time of continual sunshine,' or *tau* 'season,' or 'weather' in Samoan. An Indonesian compound *tahun-padi* 'rice year' is originate in Proto-Austronesian *\*taqun* + *\*pajay*. It means a season from rice-crop to rice-crop. In Proto-Austronesian along with a proto-form *\*bāRas* 'rice grain,' these terms prove linguistically the fact that rice cultivation was already known at the homeland. Therefore, it is argued that *\*taqun* means originally 'rice year,' i.e. 'a half year,' as an element of 'rice culture complex' vocabularies. According to N. Miyata's talk, the unit of the Japanese *toshi* 'year' also is related to the rice harvest and said to be synonymous with the Chinese.

It should also be noted here that the manner of counting a year in terms of a unit of six months is not unique to rice cultivation only. Such an attempt can be applied to other crops. For instance, in Ikema Island (Okinawa), people pray to gods for farming and good harvest of millet twice a year, namely, in February called *ufubuyurusu-yūmugui* and in August called *ufubuyurusu-kasanban*. Successively, directly after these two rituals, in March *ukadidami-yū mugui* and in August *ukadidami-kasanban* (not phonetic, transliterated from *katakana* letters), people also pray for a protection against strong winds. This may indicate that there was a year reckoning which started with October and lasted for six months, being previous to the modern profane calendar (Noguchi 1972:204, 221–233). But, as to the problem of whether such a division was formed under the influence of the Austronesian culture, I would rather limit my discussion here to pointing out commonness between them.

Among many people of Indonesia who principally engage in rice culture, the beginning of an agricultural year is regulated traditionally by appearances of the Pleiades and Orion. In Javanese (Indonesia), the Pleiades are called *guru désa*

'village teacher,' and Orion *wluku* 'spade.' It is actually Orion, whose precursor is the Pleiades, that prescribes agricultural works. In Toraja (Sulawesi, Indonesia) people know the time for begin rice cultivation by means of the first appearance of the *tamanpaka* constellation on the eastern horizon at night. For the Toraja, this constellation is recognized as a rooster with the head of which is represented by the Pleiades, the body by Orion and the tail by Sirius (Saitō 1940:304–320).

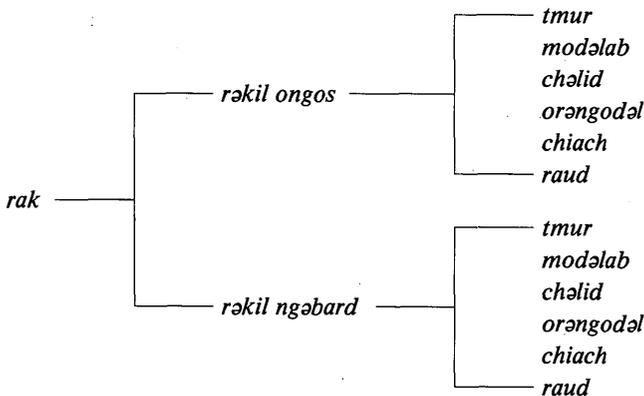
### 5.3 Root Crop Year, Sidereal Year

Since the waxing and waning of the moon is one of the most conspicuous phenomena for mankind, it is liable to be used as a unit of time. We can say that there is a fairly universal cognate relationship between the term for moon and month through the world languages. Even so, it cannot be generalized as that. Proto-Austronesian *\*bulan* 'moon, month' appears in forms such as *volana* in Merina, *bulan* in Bahasa Indonesia, or *buwan* in Tagalog of Hesperonesian. In Fijian *vula* means 'moon, month.' On the other hand, *\*bulan* does not spread to Polynesia, the terms such as *masina* in Samoan, or *mahina* in Hawaiian are derived from a Proto-Austronesian derivative *\*ma-sinaR* 'to ray, to shine' (*\*ma-*:an intransitive prefix). In Proto-Trukic in Micronesia, the term for month also derived from a Proto-Austronesian *\*ma-damaR* 'to burn resin, to be bright during the night,' and it is used as a means to subdivide a year.

In contrast, the sidereal year was substantially developed in the Central Caroline Islands of Micronesia, where people relied on it in relation to navigation or fishing (Akimichi 1983). For example, in Satawal Island, people can predict, when certain stars appear and disappear, a storm rising. They recognize twenty-one storm-stars, among them there are twelve stars which rise over the horizon right before sunrise. These twelve stars are applied to distinguish twelve months (*meram*) in a year (Akimichi 1980). There are not, however, necessarily twelve groupings of stars or constellations assigned to months. The number of sidereal months varies among the islands and the several schools of navigation (Goodenough 1953:25). In Satawal Island, the year is called *rak*. This term is widely spread in Micronesia, taking similar forms, such as *rag* 'year, age' in Woleaian, *rag* 'year, age' in Ulithian, *raag* 'year' in Carolinian of Saipan, and *rak* 'south, season of the southern wind from April to October' in Marshallese. A Ponapean *rahk* also belongs to this cognate. *Rahk* has a connotative sense that the season of abundant food, especially represented by breadfruit, or vast amounts of a plant begins in the rainy months from late March to July, as opposed to the *isol* season, which means folk etymologically 'I have nothing any longer,' from August to March including the trade-wind season named *nanpër*, during which people can no longer rely upon natural grace for abundant food (Shimizu 1982:171–176). *Rahk* with a limited meaning 'breadfruit-bearing season' in Ponapean has cognates such as *roak* 'breadfruit season' in Mokilese, *raas* 'breadfruit harvest season lasting from May through August' in Trukese, and *ráák* 'breadfruit season from June to October, and westerly winds prevail' in Puluwat, etc.

Although breadfruit is the most important one to be used as a means to discern seasons in a year, in Simbo (the Solomon Islands), the year is divided into two seasons or years, i.e. *aoro nari* and *aoro vino*, named after two different species of canarium nut, *Canarium indicum* and *Canarium salomonense* (Burman 1981:253). In Oceanic cultures based on the cultivation of root crops, taro, yams, bananas, coconuts and sago are main ones. In the Trobriand Islands (Papua New Guinea), the year is subdivided into the season when the yam gardens are unripe (*geguda*) and into that when they begin to mature (*matuwo*) (Malinowski 1935:52). The reason why the rest of the crops except yams is not used as time reckoning, is because most of these can be harvested through the year.

Actually, *rak* appears in Palauan, one of the Hesperonesian languages. However, it is not clear whether the word was borrowed from other Trukic languages or it goes back to Proto-Micronesian. In Palauan, Micronesian *rak* means not only 'year, age' or 'the past,' but also one of many legendary Palauan gods who goes round the Palauan Islands over the year. *Rak* with a newly acquired meaning 'year' is given two seasonal distinctions such as the easterly wind (*ongos*) and the westerly wind (*ngəbard*), each of which is provided with six months (*rək-il* is a possessive form of *rak*).



Because food is scarce in the easterly wind season, people call it also *mərus* 'to pierce,' whereas plenty of food available in the westerly wind season is called *sim* 'harvest season, lucky time.' As to etymology, *tmur* refers to Antares (*a Scorpii*), and *modəlab* to Altair (*a Aquilae*). Both terms are borrowings from Proto-Trukic \**dumwuR*, \**mat(a)-lap(a)* 'lit. big eye.' *Chəlid* means 'god, deity,' *orəngodəl* 'roof beam,' and *raud* 'closing,' respectively.

#### 5.4 Market Calendar

In Java, people have a five-day cycle called *pasar-an* 'lit. matter of market, market day(s),' whose names are *ləgi*, *paing*, *pon*, *wagé* and *kliwon*. This calendar was made on a traditional market which five villages, formed as a basic unit of the

economic community, opened periodically in turn (Saito 1940:317–318). Further, a seven-day cycle called *wukuh* originating from India is also being used in Java, which consists of the days: *dité*, *soma*, *anggara*, *buda*, *réspati*, *sukra* and *tumpak*, etymologically borrowed from Sanskrit. At the present time, they are synonymously called in Arabic origin *akad*, *sənən*, *slasa*, *rəbo*, *kəmis*, *jəmuwah* and *sabtu*, and a thirty-five-day cycle resulted from the combination of five- and seven-day periods gives a specific meaning to Javanese everyday life, such as a village meeting is often held with a thirty five-day interval. A traditional almanac called *primbon* is deeply rooted in the Javanese society, to the extent that people like to read fortune by the sum of number assigned to each day of *pasar* and *wukuh*.

### 5.5 Biological Calendar

Lesu villagers of New Ireland (Papua New Guinea) call the 1st moon or month of the year *beta*, a sea-worm (*Palola siciliensis*, or *Eunice schemacephala*), which comes out of the sea once a year on the flood tide night between October and November (Figure 3).

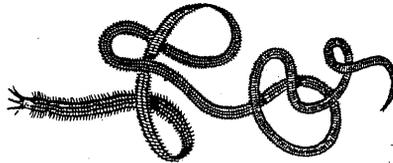


Figure 3

Further, the third moon is given a name *logum* discerned according to the first coming of a land crab (*Cardisoma* sp.) on the shore. Differences in carapace patterns of the crab also provide a means to identify the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh months (Powdermaker 1933:290–291). In total, villagers recognize seven months in relation to the ecological features of these marine animals.

For the Yami of Lanyü (or Botel Tobago Island, Taiwan), the migratory fishes including the most important flying-fish, provide a means to distinguish two periods in a normal year *mangen a vilang* ‘short year’ of twelve months. The first period of night-time fishing begins in *paneneb* ‘new year, ‘approximately in September. The fishing continues for five months until *piyavean* ‘about January’ with a few nights’ break in *pikokaod* about October (Hsü 1982:5–6).

## 6. Sacred Time

Sacred time, as argued by Leach, manifests in human cultures as ‘interval of no duration,’ i.e. each festival represents ... a temporary shift from the Normal-Profane order of existence into the Abnormal-Sacred order and back again. As a result, the year’s progress is marked by a succession of festivals (Leach 1961:134).

This category of time is linguistically analogous as 'historic present' (*présent absolu* or *présent atemporel*), where the present tense is used not to refer to a past situation, but to express universal facts transcended the profane time. However, we cannot say 'tenseless' for a historic present, because the 'present' tense inevitably appears even in the context of the 'sacred' time, which, rituals taking place, can be explained only meta-linguistically.

For the Ngaju Dayak (Kalimantan, Indonesia), the two months between the harvest and the resumption of work in the rice fields called *helat* (~*helang*)-*nyelo* comes from Proto-Austronesian \**səlang* 'interval' + Proto-Southeast Barito \**nyilu* 'rice year.' It is considered that this time is that of passing away and becoming, and of the expiration of one period in the existence of the world and the beginning of another. Everyone is back in the village at this time, and the major religious rites are celebrated (Schärer 1963:81-82, 96). During this season, people are to leave work in the rice fields and come back home. The Acehnese (Sumatra, Indonesia) also have a distinction between *musém pice* 'the land is closed,' which implies the period when rice is planted in the fields and *musém luaih blang* 'the land is open,' i.e. the period when the land stands open to men and cattle. During the latter period, people set up tomb-stones, burn limes, pierce the ears of young girls, and other rituals (Hurgronje 1906:258-259). *Musém pice* functions as sacred time.

Madagascar was settled by the oldest immigrants from Indonesia at latest AD 500, who are considered to have well preserved some of the ancient customs in their ancestral land. For example, there is a Merina word *elan(a)*(~*elanelana*)-*taona*, coming from Proto-Austronesian \**səlang* + \**taqun*, which means 'gap between years.' Madagascar has two seasons, the rainy season from October to March, and the dry season from April to September. During the dry season, which means a slack season for farmers, Merina people take place a *famadihana* ritual 'lit. turning of the corpse,' a custom unique to the High Plateau area of Madagascar. In the Merina, a new year *loha-taona* 'lit. head of a year,' starts with October in the beginning of the rainy season, from this time farmers start rice cultivation. The end of the dry season, when the Merina tombs are dug down into the ground, is called 'small month' or *asara-maimbo* 'stinking month.' In contrast, the commencement of the rainy season is called 'big month' or *asara-manitra* 'fragrant month.' There is a proverb saying that *Ny andro lohataon-diavolana, ka na ny miherika aza hitany* 'The beginning of a year is the time to sow in fields, don't cry over at your harvest., i.e. Decisions made on New Year's Day are the key to a successful year' (Sakiyama 1991:725-729).

Madagascar has been influenced by Arabic cultures since about the ninth century. As one of these cultures is the names of days and months, the latter being adopted on the basis of twelve constellations names found in the zodiac, which originally are applied for telling fortunes (*vintana*) and indicating geographical directions.

*Vintana* system in Figure 4 shows that the Madagascar year starts with the

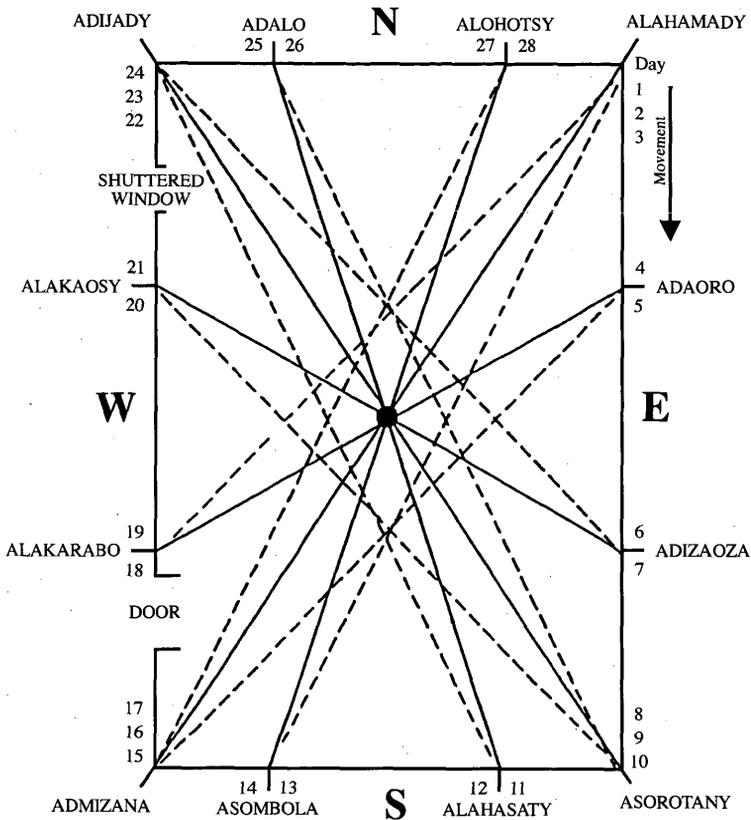


Figure 4 (Anonymous 1973)

month *alahamady* 'January,' which is regarded as being on the northeast corner of the house toward the sunrise, and after circulating round the house, ends with *alohotsy* 'December.' As a matter of fact, this Madagascar case evidences the recognition transformed from space to time, which I have discussed in Chapter 3.

### Conclusion

The Austronesian languages in Micronesia, the Philippines and Taiwan have been developed from Proto-Austronesian into those more sophisticated and complicated grammatical structures which involve tense and aspect. However, it is not yet made clear how these tense and aspect systems developed as secondary grammatical phenomena are correlated to folk cultures, or social structures in these regions. Indonesians often say *jam karet* 'rubber time' in Bahasa Indonesia by self-scorning to not be punctual. But, nobody will not think that this expression is interrelated with a loose grammatical structure which characterizes Bahasa Indonesia.

Although the subject of this symposium is 'time and language,' I have resulted in discussing 'language of time' mainly. It should be furthermore studied to what extent linguistic (grammatical) forms referring to time are correlated to human action or behavior, culture symbolism, or culture pattern.

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