

## **Decoupling the relation-marking and transitivity-marking functions of Austronesian voice**

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It is generally agreed upon that the Austronesian voice system fulfills both (i) a transitivity-marking function in the basic Actor Voice/Non-Actor Voice (AV/NAV) dichotomy as well as (ii) an important role in marking the grammatical relation of an extracted argument. Focusing on (i) has led to typologizing Austronesian languages by alignment type along an ergativity-accusativity axis while focusing on (ii) has led to a variety of proposals that view the voice system as a type of case agreement. Here, I put aside questions of morphosyntactic alignment to ask whether these two functions can be fruitfully decoupled or whether they must be linked, as is often presupposed. Treating them as (semi-)independent variables, we arrive at a rough typology where voice plays a role both in relation-marking in extraction contexts and transitivity marking (Tagalog-type languages), only relation marking (Malagasy type languages), and only transitivity marking (Selayarese-type languages), as shown:

Tagalog-type: Relations, Transitivity

Malagasy-type: Relations, \*Transitivity

Selayarese-type: \*Relations, Transitivity

In languages where the historical voice morphology has been completely lost, other syntactic reflexes of the old AV/NAV distinction arguably continue a role in transitivity marking, as in Tongan-type languages. In Tetun type languages, on the other hand, the historical Austronesian voice system plays no role in either transitivity marking or relation marking:

Tongan-type: \*Relations, Transitivity

Tetun-type: \*Relations, \*Transitivity

While the two functions above are relatively independent, they come into clear conflict in cases of agent extraction with a definite patient. Here, the relation marking function requires AV while the transitivity function requires NAV. By viewing these principles as constraints in conflict, we can explain the rare Selayarese-type among the voice-preserving languages, in which the transitivity-marking function takes precedence over the relation-marking function. I argue that this type provides a very valuable insight into the development of a pattern seen more widely in the Oceanic languages. Philippine languages on the other hand, which tend strongly to prioritize the relation-marking function over the transitivity-marking function of voice when these two come into conflict, employ case-based strategies to resolve the tension, an option which is not available to those languages south of the Philippines which have largely lost the historical case markers.