

(1) Paper title

Relativization in Austronesian

(2) Sub-field (functional, discourse, sociolinguistics, phonology, formal syntax, semantics, historical, language contact, etc.)

Syntax, typology

(3) Name(s) of author(s)

Masayoshi Shibatani

(4) Affiliation(s) of author(s)

Rice University

(5) Email address for each author

[Matt.shibatani@gmail.com](mailto:Matt.shibatani@gmail.com)

## Page 2

Despite the important role Austronesian languages have played in the typological and universals research of relative clauses and the attendant hierarchy of grammatical relations (Keenan and Comrie 1977, *inter alia*), no critical assessment of the assumed analysis of the Austronesian relativization has been made. Similarity between the Austronesian relativization pattern and those seen in Tibetan and Uto-Aztecan indicates that the so-called “subject-only” constraint on the Austronesian relativization is an epiphenomenon emanating from the parallel between clausal predicates and argument nominalizations, and does not support the hierarchy of grammatical relations widely assumed in the relativization literature. Relative clauses in these languages are in fact argument nominalizations with a gap that are simply juxtaposed to head nominals, some with and some others without a linker, rather than full clauses whose argument undergoes deletion or extraction as in the traditional relative clause analysis. The Austronesian focus morphology has the same function of indicating the semantic role (agentive, patientive, instrumental, etc.) of the nominalized argument as the nominalizers in Tibetan and Uto-Aztecan languages. What is peculiar to Austronesian is that clausal predicates have the same form as argument nominalizations due to their historical origins, as argued by Starosta, Pawley and Reid (1982).

The primary data for the proposed analysis come from the author’s fieldwork on the Sasak language of Lombok Island in eastern Indonesia, which independently show that the subject relation is not relevant in relativization of this Western Malayo-Polynesian language. The supporting, secondary data are drawn from Tagalog and other Austronesian languages as well as from the language families mentioned above.

**Page 3**

- Keenan, Edward L. and Bernard Comrie. 1977. NP accessibility and universal grammar. *Linguistic Inquiry* 8. 63-100.
- Starosta, Stanley, Andrew K. Pawley and Lawrence A. Reid. 1982. The evolution of focus in Austronesian. In A. Halim, L Carrington, and S.A Wurm (eds.), *Papers from the Third International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics* 1. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics. 145-170.