

Austronesian Undressed: How and Why Languages Become Isolating

Edited by David Gil and Antoinette Schapper

Dedication

To the memory of Scott Paauw

Preface

This volume is a product, albeit a belated and rather indirect one, of a panel on "Isolating Austronesian Languages", organised by David Gil and John McWhorter, which took place on the 22nd of June 2009, at the Eleventh International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics, in Aussois in the French Alps.

The production of the volume took much longer than anticipated, due largely to the sloth and ineptitude of the first editor, David Gil. In the course of the years, we lost a few papers but also gained a few others, and several of the original papers presented at the 11ICAL panel evolved substantially as their authors were able to incorporate fresh insights and understandings with the passage of time.

The focus of the volume is largely inspired by John McWhorter, who, in his writings, brought the issue of isolating Austronesian languages to the attention of the general linguistic community, and introduced the metaphor of languages undressing. For several years, editorial work on the volume was assisted by Scott Paauw, whose untimely passing was a great shock to us all — this volume is dedicated to his memory.

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction
David Gil and Antoinette Schapper
2. What does it mean to be an isolating language? The case of Riau Indonesian
David Gil
3. The loss of affixation in Cham: Contact, internal drift and the limits of linguistic history
Marc Brunelle
4. Dual heritage: The story of Riau Indonesian and its relatives
David Gil
5. 'Voice' and bare verbs in Colloquial Minangkabau
Sophie Crouch
6. Javanese undressed: Isolating phenomena in 'peripheral' dialects
Thomas J. Connors
7. Is Central Flores really typologically unusual?
Alexander Elias
8. From Lamaholot to Alorese: Morphological loss in adult language contact
Marian Klamer
9. Double agent, double cross? Or how a suffix changes sides in an isolating language: *dór* in Tetun Dili
Catharina Williams-van Klinken and John Hajek
10. The origins of isolating word structure in eastern Timor
Antoinette Schapper
11. Becoming Austronesian: Mechanisms of language dispersal across southern Island Southeast Asia
Mark Donohue and Timothy Denham
12. Concluding reflections
John McWhorter