3

THESE 'PROCRUSTEAN' FEELINGS...
SOME OF MY PROBLEMS IN DESCRIBING KILIVILA

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Procrustes, also called POLYPEMON or DAMASTES, in Greek legend, a robber
dwelling in the neighbourhood of Eleusis; he was slain by the Attic hero Theseus.
He had an iron bed (or according to some accounts, two beds) on which he com-
pelled his victims to lie, stretching or cutting off their legs to make them fit the
bed's length. The 'bed of Procrustes' or 'Procrustean bed' has become proverbial
for inflexibility. (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica. 1986. Micropaedia Vol. 9:
718).

1. Introduction

I presume it is a rather common experience for linguists dealing with
non-Indo-European languages to realize sooner or later that they some-
what resemble old Procrustes in their attempts to describe and analyze
these languages. It goes without saying that linguists are not such villains
as 'the old stretcher' – at least most of them aren't – and the rather un-
comfortable feeling of resembling this classic Greek rascal generally
overcomes us (or at least most of us) when we realize that in describing
and analyzing these languages we are sometimes forced to use 'tools' that
have been 'forged' in the long tradition of linguistic descriptions and anal-
yses of Indo-European languages. This is not to say that many of the tools
developed in this great linguistic tradition do not fit perfectly well for the
description and analysis of an incredibly large number of different gram-
matical phenomena in different languages, but these tools hardly fit for
the description of a number of phenomena we hit upon dealing with these

non-Indo-European languages; indeed, they may not fit at all for reaching at an adequate and satisfying linguistic description.

In this article I will discuss some aspects of my description of Kilivila, the language of the Trobriand Islanders, that made and still make me feel more like a 'Procrustes' than a descriptive linguist. This 'Procrustean feeling' (which does not resemble at all an 'oceanic' one and must not be mixed up with the 'crustacean' one you sometimes get dining in the Trobriands) overcomes me with at least the following four different linguistic phenomena: the verbal expression, serial verb constructions, the word order pattern, and the adverbs of place. But before discussing 'my descriptive problems', I first want to present some general information about the language I have been dealing with for the last nine years.

Kilivila (also: Kiriwina, Boyowa) is one of the forty Austronesian languages spoken in the area of Milne Bay Province in Papua New Guinea. Typologically it is classified as belonging to the 'Papuan Tip Cluster'-group (Capell 1976:6, 9; Ross 1988:25-27); moreover it is classified as one of the languages with VOS word order (Senft 1986:107-112; see also below). The Kilivila language family encompasses the languages Budibud (or: Nada), Muyuw (or: Murua) and Kilivila. Kilivila is spoken by about 17,500 speakers, the majority of whom live on the Trobriand Islands. Bronislaw Malinowski's ethnographic work on these islands and on the culture of their inhabitants has made them rather well known even outside of anthropology, and Malinowski's article on the *Classificatory particles in the language of Kiriwina* (Malinowski 1920) counts as one of the classic papers in (Austronesian) linguistics.

In 1986 I published the first grammar and dictionary of this language. In the introduction to my chapter on inflectional morphology in this monograph I already hinted at the parallel between the grammarian and Procrustes (Senft 1986:28), and in what follows I would like to make this hint a bit more explicit.

2. *What about the use of terms like 'aspect' and 'tense' in describing the Kilivila verbal expression?*

In Kilivila we find forms like *ekebiga, kulegasi*, and *agisemi* (for the Kilivila orthography see Senft 1986:14-15), which can be described and analyzed in the following way. *Ekebiga* consists of the verb stem *-kebiga-* which translates as 'to tell, to talk, to say, to speak' and the subject prefix for the third person, *e-*, which is unmarked with respect to 'aspect' and/or 'tense' and translates as 'she/he, (it)'. The verbal expression *ekebiga* translates as 'she/he talks'. *Kulegasi* consists of the verb stem *-lega-* which translates as 'to listen', the prefix for the second person, *ku-*, again unmarked with respect to 'aspect' and/or 'tense', and the suffix *-si* which is a number marker indicating plural. The verbal expression *kulegasi* translates as 'you (plural) listen'. *Agisemi* consists of the verb stem *-gise-* ('to see [someone]') with the possessive pronominal suffix *-mi* for the second person plural that indicates an intimate degree of possession, and the prefix for the first person, *a-*, also unmarked with respect to 'aspect' and/or 'tense'. The verbal expression *agisemi* translates as 'I see you (plural)'.

A closer look at the verbal expressions in Kilivila reveals the following: the Kilivila verbal expression (in general) consists of a subject prefix with a marker for 'aspect' and/or 'tense', the verb stem proper, and a marker for number.

The verb stem is invariable (like: *-nukwali* 'to know'). It is never realized in this form as a verb in actual speech production, but is produced in combination with certain affixes that indicate person (or: the subject of the verb), 'aspect' and/or 'tense', and number (like: *binukwalisi*, e.g.: 'they will know'), moreover, – as illustrated by the example *agisemi* ('I see you') above – with some verb stems it is also possible to incorporate an object directly into the verbal expression, if the object is referred to by a pronoun. This is done by suffixing directly to the verb stem the set of possessive pronouns of the first and second person and of dual, that indicate intimate inalienable degree of possession; in the plural, the plural marker is then suffixed to this verbal expression (for details see Senft 1986:33-35). Verb stems can also be duplicated and then indicate an action in progress or the plurality or repetitiveness of an action (like: *-boku* 'to cough', *-bukuboku* 'to cough all the time, to have a bad cough'). We

can differentiate between simple forms of the verb stem (like: -la 'go [away from here]'), complex forms of the verb stem (for example: -biya-gila 'draw, move', from -bia 'pull out' and -gila 'pluck'), and verb stems that onsist of the verb root plus an adjective, or a noun, or a classifier (for example: -tumapola 'give assent', from -tama 'say yes' and pola 'her/ his eyebrows').

There are five different subject prefixes or personal pronominal prefixes: a-, ku-, i-, ta-, and ka-. Besides the first, second and third person, Kilivila distinguishes between a dual inclusive and a dual exclusive; moreover, with the first person plural it also distinguishes between inclusive and exclusive. These affixes are prefixed to the verb stem, thus forming one unit.

There is no morpheme indicating singular or, to put it differently, singular is indicated by a zero-morpheme; plural is marked by the plural morpheme -si suffixed to the verb stem with the prefixed subject affix, thus forming one unit. I refer to this unit with the term 'verbal expression' to meet the complexity of the word formation processes involved.

'Aspect' and/or 'tense' are either unmarked or indicated by a threefold series of affixes, namely: b-/bu-/ba-, l-/lu-/la-, and m-/mu-/ma- that are prefixed to the subject prefixes. The vowels u and a follow the consonants b, l and m to avoid consonant clusters that would not agree with the Kilivila syllable patterns; the vowels always agree with the vowels found in the respective subject prefix syllables of the unmarked series of affixes. In table 1 I present the subject prefixes together with the markers for 'aspect' and/or 'tense' and the plural markers, leaving the 'slot' for the verb stem empty. In what follows I refer to these series of prefixes as series of subject prefixes (and no longer differentiate between subject prefix proper and the prefix marking 'aspect' and/or 'tense').

The attentive reader will have noticed that up till now I always put the technical terms ASPECT and TENSE in quotation marks and that I always referred to these two phenomena with the rather strange compound 'aspect and/or tense'. In the following discussion of the data presented in table 1 I hope to justify this rather strange usage of these terms that are clearly defined in linguistics.

Table 1. The Kilivila system of subjector personal pronominal prefixes (with the markers for 'aspect' and/or 'tense' and the plural indicating suffixes -*si*).

	I	II	III	IV
1s	*a-*	*ba-*	*la-*	*ma-*
2s	*ku-*	*buku-*	*luku-*	*muku-*
3s	*i-/e-*	*bi-*	*le-*	*me-*
dual incl.	*ta-*	*bita-*	*lata-*	*mata-*
dual excl.	*ka-*	*bika-*	*laka-*	*maka-*
1p incl.	*ta-* *-si*	*bita-* *-si*	*lata-* *-si*	*mata-* *-si*
1p excl.	*ka-* *-si*	*bika-* *-si*	*laka-* *-si*	*maka-* *-si*
2p	*ku-* *-si*	*buku-* *-si*	*luku-* *-si*	*muku-* *-si*
3p	*i-* *-si*	*bi-* *-si*	*le-* *-si*	*me-* *-si*
	e- *-si*			

The first series (I) of subject prefixes is neutral, i.e. unmarked with respect to aspect and/or tense. This series can be used by the speaker at any time in any context, and the verbal expression is completely acceptable and grammatically correct.

The second series (II) expresses the concept of an incompletive action. This action may happen in the future, or may have happened in the past, it may have been expected to happen in the past – though it did not happen, or it may be part of a hypothetical event. Thus, a part of the semantics of this series also covers the concept of expressing a statement as irrealis (see Bugenhagen elsewhere in this volume). A verbal expression that uses subject prefixes of series (II) like

(1) *batananamsasi*

(with the subject prefix for 1s:incl. second series, *bata-*, the verb stem -*nanamsa-*, and the plural marking suffix -*si*) can be translated as:

> 'we would think', 'we should think', 'we could think', 'we can think', 'we may think', 'we will think'.

The actual translation of verbal expressions using subject prefixes of the second series of possible personal pronominal prefixes can only be given and justified by reference to the context of the utterance as a whole.

The third series (III) expresses the concept of a completed action. This series has quite clear references to past time; it is affirmative or emphatic. A verbal expression that uses subject prefixes of series (III) like

(2) *lenanamsa*

(with the subject prefix for 3s, third series, *le-*, and the verb stem *-na-namsa-*) can be translated as:

'he thought', or as 'he has thought'.

There are some context dependent cases, where verbal expressions using subject prefixes of series (III) can also be translated into English with progressive present tense. Thus, the phrase

(3) *bogwa lenanamsa*

(with the adverb *bogwa*, 'already' and the verbal expression *lenanamsa*) can be translated as:

'he thought already', or as 'he is thinking already'.

Again, the actual translation of verbal expressions using subject prefixes of the third series of possible personal pronominal prefixes can only be given and justified by reference to the context of the utterance as a whole.

The fourth series (IV) expresses the concept of an habitual action; however, it can also indicate optative or irrealis – actually, it may be more adequate to refer to this series as expressing mood rather than aspect and/or tense. This series is quite archaic and hardly ever used in ordinary everyday language production; if used, it can be interpreted as an indicator of either poetic or humourous style. Thus, the verbal expression

(4) *menanamsa*

(with the subject prefix for 3s, fourth series, *me-*, and the verb stem *-na-namsa-*) can be translated as:

'(oh), he may think'.

Considering these four series according to their frequency in actual speech production, it can be stated that the first (I), second (II), and third (III) series form the essential framework of the construction of the Kilivila verbal expression. With the four series it becomes quite obvious that they distinguish much more 'aspect' than 'tense'. A kind of 'compensation' for the lack of a more elaborate system of 'tenses' is given adverbially, combining adverbs of time with verbal expressions, like

(5) *Apaisewa   besatuta*
     A-paisewa besatuta
     1s-work   now

     'I am working now.'

(6) *Tau bila   nubyeya*
     Tau bi-la   nubyeya
     Man 3s:FUT-go tomorrow

     'The man will go tomorrow.'

(7) *Lova   vivila   ela   ebani   yena*
     Lova   vivila   e-la   e-bani   yena
     Yesterday girl   3s-go   3s-angle fish

     'Yesterday the girl went fishing.'

Moreover, speakers may use serial verb constructions to express their intentions more specifically. Thus, if speakers want to emphasize one component of a statement of intention by a serial verb construction consisting of two verbal expressions, they produce the first verbal expression using subject prefixes of series (II) and the second verbal expression using subject prefixes of series (I); there must be subject agreement with the subject prefixes of the first and second verbal expression. Thus,

(8) *Bala   akakaya*
     Ba-la   a-kakaya
     1s:FUT-go 1s-bathe

     'I will go bathing.'

is a statement of intention with emphasis on 'bathing' as the action that is in the speaker's focus of attention.

If speakers want to express an intention they had in the past – and that usually remains unfulfilled – by a serial verb construction consisting of two verbal expressions, they produce the first verbal expression using subject prefixes of series (I) and the second verbal expression using sub-ject prefixes of series (II); again, there must be subject agreement with the subject prefixes of the two verbal expressions. Thus,

(9) *Adoki   bapaisewa   Pinsapan*
     A-doki   ba-paisewa   Pinsapan
     1s-think 1s:FUT-work   Finschhafen

     'I thought that I would work in Finschhafen.'

is an utterance which implies that the speaker had the intention to go to Finschhafen and get some work there – some months ago, but that (s)he did not do it.

These examples should suffice for the purposes pursued here. Table 2 summarizes the 'glosses' given so far for the scope of the four subject prefix series with respect to 'aspect and/or tense':

Even a brief glance at table 2 reveals that the use of the technical terms 'tense' and 'aspect' with these four subject prefix series of the Kilivila lan-guage is highly problematic. With the possibilities Kilivila offers to refer to 'aspects' of time in which an action takes place there is 'something' that coincides with Comrie's general definition of tense, namely "the gram-maticalization of location in time" (Comrie 1985:vii). However, with Ki-livila we also find 'something' that coincides with Comrie's general defi-nition of 'aspect', namely "aspects are different ways of viewing the inter-nal temporal constituency of a situation" (Comrie 1976:3). It goes without saying that I agree with Comrie that "it is crucial to maintain the concep-tual distinction between tense and aspect, and to have a terminology that is capable of maintaining this distinction" (Comrie 1985:7), and Comrie himself discusses many cases where keeping this distinction is rather pro-blematic. In attempting to describe a specific language like Kilivila with respect to its possibilities of marking aspect and tense in its verb(al ex-

Table 2. The four subject prefix series and their glosses with respect to their scope –
marking 'aspect and/or tense'.

subject prefix series	characteristics/scope marking 'aspect and/or tense'
I	unmarked with respect to 'aspect' and 'tense', neutral, acceptable and grammatical at any time in any context
II	inclompetive action – which may happen in the future, or may happened in the past, or may be part of a hypothetical event – irrealis
III	completed action – in the past, affirmative, emphatic
IV	habitual action, optative, irrealis, humorous connotations (mood?!)

Subject prefix series I-IV in combination with adverbs of time can be used to specify the
time of an action; serial verb constructions can be used to express the speaker's intentions
more specifically.

pression), however, this general problem (unfortunately or, interestingly
enough) keeps on emerging – as documented in table 2 – and asks for a
solution. The concepts 'aspect' and 'tense' certainly cover sections, scopes,
realms, or aspects of the various and different meanings the Kilivila
verbal expression can convey; however, the concepts 'tense' and 'aspect'
only cover parts of the meanings to be conveyed by the various possible
forms of the Kilivila verbal expression, but definitely not the whole.

Therefore I am left with the rather unsatisfying feeling that my descrip-
tion of the Kilivila verbal expression with respect to the scopes of aspect
and/or tense covered remains rather vague and shaky. The dissatisfaction,
not to say the frustration, I feel with my description of these grammatical
phenomena increases even more when I realize that not only the Tro-
briand Islanders obviously do not have any difficulties at all in using these
various forms of the verbal expression with all shades of meaning in their
speech, but that I myself do not have any difficulties either using the sys-
tem of verbal expressions in my speech to pursue my verbal means and
ends in the field.

To overcome these frustrations it may help to coin some specific termi-
nology to describe the phenomena found in the Kilivila verbal expression.
Thus, we may think of something like 'contextual action time' to take into
account that it is the context of an utterance which in general determines
the "internal temporal constituency of a situation" (Comrie 1976:3) and/

or "the grammaticalization of location in time" (Comrie 1985:vii) given in, and with, the respective verbal expression.

It may also be that we have to incorporate pragmatics directly into our grammatic description of the Kilivila verbal expression to take into account something like "different 'realms of validity" (Lyons 1982:114) of an utterance and effects like intentional ambiguity of an utterance because of politeness (Brown and Levinson 1978) or because of constraints by, or obligations of, ritualized communication (Senft 1987a, 1991a, 1991b; Eibl-Eibesfeldt and Senft 1987); this would imply some rethinking of the descriptive terminology applied to the Kilivila verbal expression – from a more pragmatic point of view, of course. However, so far I cannot offer an alternative for a more adequate description of the Kilivila verbal expression with respect to its expression of 'aspect' and/or 'tense'.

It may also be, as Nikolaus Himmelmann pointed out to me, that Bybee and Dahl's "gram-types" (Bybee and Dahl 1989:55) offer an elegant method to overcome my dilemma, so that I just "do not have to concern [myself] with defining 'tense' and 'aspect' or the more recalcitrant 'mood' as overarching categories' (Bybee and Dahl 1989:97). However, I am not quite convinced, yet.

3. Serial verb constructions in Kilivila – phrases or sentences?

After a few months living in Tauwema village I learned that when I went for a bath to a freshwater cave in the bush, the most adequate, idiomatic and polite answer to the question *ambe* (where [are you going to]?') – here used as a greeting formula (see Malinowski 1936:314; Senft 1987a: 107-108) – was the exact enumeration of my intended actions, to be expressed in the form of a rather complex serial verb construction, for example:

(10) *Bala,*   *bakakaya,*   *baka'ita,*   *basisu,*   *bapaisewa*
     Ba-la   *ba-kakaya*   *ba-ka'ita*   *ba-sisu*   *ba-paisewa*
     1s:FUT-go 1s:FUT-bath 1s:FUT-come back 1s:FUT-stay 1s:FUT-work

   'I will go, I will have a bath, I will come back, I will stay, I will work.' (Or: 'I will go to have a bath. Then I will return. I will stay [in the village] and work.')

These complex serial verb constructions are used rather frequently in everyday speech and conversation. To give just another example, the request

(11) *Magigu yokwa kupilasegu*
      Magi-gu yokwa ku-pilase-gu
      Wish-my you   you-help-me

      'I would like you to help me.'

may be answered with the sentence

(12) *Igau bama   bagisi   bapilasem*
      Igau ba-ma   ba-gisi   ba-pilase-m
      Later 1s:FUT-come 1s:FUT-see 1s:FUT-help-you

      'I will come later, look at it and help you.'

Every native speaker of Kilivila is quite anxious to be as exact as possible in the correct listing and enumeration of the actions according to their continuous succession. Speakers, realizing that they have violated this general rule in their speech production, will restart their utterance from the very beginning of their listing the actions they want to report, just to make sure that the succession of these actions is given in its correct order.

The longer and the more complex these serial verb constructions are, the more my difficulties increase in deciding whether these serial verb constructions should be analyzed as an accumulation of verb phrases forming one sentence only, or whether I should better analyze and more appropriately describe these constructions as sentences, consisting of just one (or two) verb phrase(s) each (see also Heeschen elsewhere in this volume). I have the 'feeling' that the latter alternative would be more appropriate, especially in constructions like the first example mentioned above. However, a grammarian must not resort to something unverifiable like a 'feeling', and therefore – at least up till now – I stick to the former alternative in my Kilivila sentence analyses (although I must confess I cannot suppress a somewhat bad, 'Procrustean' feeling).

4. The Kilivila word order pattern

I have reclassified Kilivila as one of the languages with VOS word order
(Senft 1986:6, 107-112), arguing against Capell (1976:6-7) who described
Kilivila as a language with SVO word order. I mentioned in my grammar
that it is possible to utter sentences in Kilivila that follow the SVO word
order pattern, for example:

(13) *Kilagola   etatai   makena lagim*
     S   V   O

     Kilagola   e-tatai   ma-ke-na   lagim
     Kilagola   3s-carve   this-wooden-this   canoe prow board

     'Kilagola carves this canoe prow board.'

However, this sentence emphasizes the fact that it is Kilagola, and not To-
pia, or Tosulala, or Keda'ila, or someone else who carves the canoe prow
board. Thus, I argue that sentence initial subject conveys emphasis in Kili-
vila. Without emphasis, in a general and neutral context, a speaker would
utter this sentence as follows:

(14) *Etatai makena   lagim   Kilagola*
     V   O   S

I describe Kilivila as a language with the following prime word order
patterns:

1. Verb(al expression) – indirect object – direct object – subject (V O_{ind}
   O_{dir} S), for example:

(15) *Kuseki   mtona tomwaya   sitana tobaki Gunter*
     V O_{ind} O_{dir} S

     ku-seki   m-to-na   tomwaya sitana   tobaki   Gunter
     2s-give   this-man-this   old man a bit   tobacco   Gunter

     'Gunter give this old man a bit of tobacco.'

2. Verb(al expression) – object – subject (VOS), for example:

(16) *Emigai*   *megwa*   *Weyei*
     V   O   S

   e-migai   *megwa*   *Weyei*
   3s-whisper   magical formulae   Weyei

   'Weyei whispers magical formulae.'

3. Verb(al expression) – object (VO), for example:

(17) *Kuwosi wosi*
     V   O

   ku-wosi wosi
   2s-sing song

   'Sing a song.'

4. Verb(al expression) – subject (VS), for example:

(18) *Ekeosi*   *Bomsamesa*
     V   S

   e-keosi   *Bomsamesa*
   3s-dance   Bomsamesa

   'Bomsamesa is dancing.'

These word order patterns are rather flexible though; however, their variations convey foregrounding and thus emphasis.

From the general linguist's point of view I am completely convinced that this syntactic description is correct: in 1989 I did a restudy on just this topic with forty-eight informants of different age and sex, and this restudy – using sentences like the examples given above presented in different word order patterns – confirmed my description of the prime word order patterns rather strikingly.

Nevertheless, if I am confronted with single, though rather complex verbal expressions like

(19) *Ayobwelim*
     A-yobweli-m
     1s-love-you

     'I love you.'

(20) *Bipilasem*
     Bi-pilase-m
     3s:FUT-help-you

     'He will help you.'

or:

(21) *Kulukwedasisi*
     Ku-lukwe-dasi-si
     2s-tell -us(1p:incl.)-(p)

     'You tell us.'

the 'Procrustean' feeling that my description of such utterances as verbs
or verbal expressions (or even verb phrases) does not do justice to the Ki-
livila language creeps up my spine. Are these complex verbal expressions
that incorporate objects – as affixes though – in their word form not rath-
er sentences of their own right? Would it not be more appropriate to con-
sider in these cases the subject prefix as a subject proper, and the affixed
object as an object of its own right, and then analyze these verbal expres-
sions not as sentences consisting of one verbal expression only, but as sen-
tences with a subject, a verb, and an object that follow the word order
pattern SVO?

I am completely aware that doing this would result in 'wrong' analyses –
from the traditional, general linguist's point of view – and I know that
word order is not about morpheme order. However, I just cannot get rid
of the impression that in this case this point of view is not the most ap-
propriate one – at least if I argue from 'within the language', from an
emic linguistic point of view (whatever this may be). I concede that this
may be too idiosyncratic a feeling, but it has been bothering me ever since
I started with my grammatical analyses of Kilivila in 1982 – and I can on-
ly hope that at least some of my colleagues may understand my uneasiness

behind this problem, and not all will accuse me of abusing this paper as a substitute for a psychoanalyst's 'couch' waiting for a somewhat frustrated descriptive linguist.

5. What about an adequate description of the Kilivila adverbs of place?

After all these problems and open questions with respect to the Kilivila verbal expression, I will now briefly mention the problems I have in describing the adverbs of place in Kilivila.

Basically, there is the quite complex problem of syntactic classification, which I already mentioned in my Kilivila grammar (Senft 1986:90ff.). Adverbs of place like *omatala* 'in front of', *ovadola* 'on, on top of, on the surface of, at the mouth (opening) of', and so on, can also be classified syntactically as local adverbials consisting of a prepositional phrase with the preposition *o* 'in, into' and the noun *matala* 'eye, her/his eye' and *vadola* 'mouth, her/his mouth'. I decided to present these constructions in general as one adverb each.

Most of the adverbs of space, like *olopola* 'in, inside of', *omatala* 'in front of', *olakeva* 'on top of, above, up, in the sky, over', etcetera, also serve the function of prepositions, according to their specific function in the sentence.

Adverbial constructions with personal reference – which is expressed by suffixing possessive pronoun affixes indicating intimate, inalienable degree of possession to the adverb – are in general presented as one adverb and not as an adverbial phrase in my Kilivila grammar. Moreover, with all these constructions, the form with the suffix *-la* not only uses the third person singular in its referential function, but it also has a neutral meaning. Thus, we have for example:

(22) *omatala*   'in front of' (neutral meaning)

(23) *omatala*   'in front of her/him' (referential function)

besides the prepositional phrase

(24) *o matala*   'in front of her/his eyes'

(the forms *omatala/o matala* must be parsed as *o(-)mata-la* in(-)eye
-her/his), and

(25) *otalila*   'near, close to, near her/him'

(26) *otaligu*   'near me'
     (*otali-gu*   'near-me')

(27) *otalim*   'near you'
     (*otali-m*   'near-you')

and so on.

It is rather obvious that the decision to present these adverbs of place that
may also fulfill the function of prepositions as one word form only is
problematic. It is a possible analysis, of course. However, I wonder
whether it is really an adequate one; a more minute analysis of these ad-
verbs/prepositions reveals more subtle semantic differences conveyed
with these adverbs/prepositions in different contexts. It may be that at
least one of these differences can be expressed in different orthographic
forms. Thus, *okopo'ula*, for example, may be used to express the concepts
'behind, back, behind her/him', while the prepositional phrase *o kopo'ula*
(with *kopo'u-*, possessive pronoun suffix, intimate degree of possession),
may only be used to express the following two concepts, namely: 'on her/
his back' in a locative sense, and 'on(to) her/his back' in a directional or
'destinative' (Mosel 1982:127; also Klein 1991:89) sense.

However, this leaves us with the problem that the difference between the
locative and the directional, or destinative, sense of such an utterance can
only be disambiguated by referring to the context in which the utterance
is produced. I hope I can present some better and more minute analyses of
the semantics of Kilivila adverbs of place and prepositions as a result of
further field research.

At the end of this subsection it should be mentioned that the problems
discussed above are well known and rather general in Oceanic (and, as
shown in Heine (1989), in African) linguistics. Bowden (1991:5), for ex-
ample, emphasizes that already Ray recognized the presence of nouns in

(compound) prepositions and adverbs in Baki and To'aba'ita. Later grammars tend to avoid the term 'preposition', but there is no real consensus on which labels should be applied. Moreover, I would also like to note that in connection with the problem raised here, future research will have to discuss the special status of 'body part terms' that are used in Kilivila expressions of location. That these 'body part terms' as locative expressions need intensive discussion is well founded by the results of research on other Oceanic (see e.g. Bowden 1991) and on Meso-American languages.[1]

7. Concluding remarks

[...] ist unser Bedürfnis nach Erkennen nicht eben dies Bedürfnis nach Bekanntem? Der Wille, unter allem Fremden, Ungewöhnlichen, Fragwürdigen etwas aufzudecken, das uns nicht mehr beunruhigt? (Nietzsche 1985:122)

In this article I have presented a number of problems and 'Procrustean' feelings I have in describing aspects of the Kilivila language. Some of the problems are easy to understand, others may not be so easy to understand for other linguists; they may even document my rather idiosyncratic scruples in describing 'my' Kilivila language, because, unlike Procrustes, I do not want to violate the right of hospitality (Moritz 1979:211-212) Kilivila and its native speakers granted me. This paper raises a number of questions, and I highly appreciate any criticism, any suggestions, proposals, recommendations, guesses and hints that may help to find answers to these questions.

I know that this is not the way one should finish a paper, but this time I am in a similar position as the actors at the end of Bertold Brecht's play *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan*:

Verehrtes Publikum, jetzt kein Verdruß:
Wir wissen wohl, das ist kein rechter Schluß.

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[1]See for example Brugman and Macaulay 1986; Friedrich 1969; Levinson 1991; MacLaury 1989.

Wir stehen selbst enttäuscht und sehn betroffen
Den Vorhang zu und alle Fragen offen.

Vielleicht fiel uns vor lauter Furcht nichts ein.
Das kam schon vor. Was könnt die Lösung sein?

Der einzige Ausweg wär aus diesem Ungemach:
Sie selber dächten auf der Stelle nach
Auf welche Weis dem guten Menschen man
Zu einem guten Ende helfen kann.
Verehrtes Publikum, los, such dir selbst den Schluß!
Es muß ein guter da sein, muß, muß, muß! (Brecht 1938-1940:144)

ABBREVIATIONS

FUT	future	s	singular
O$_{dir}$	direct object	S	subject
O$_{ind}$	indirect object	V	verb
p	plural		

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