

the presence of large-scale areal patterns governing the distribution of the above features, the observed correlations may in principle be attributable to universal grammar, or alternatively to geography and parallel patterns of contact and diffusion. These possibilities may be teased apart through the pairwise examination of geographically and genealogically proximate languages differing with respect to the distribution of TAM marking. Several such pairwise examinations, within Austronesian and elsewhere, suggest that although geography may also play a role, the correlation between TAM marking and the encoding of thematic-role assignment does indeed reflect a real property of the architecture of grammar.

Why should this be so? In conclusion, it is suggested that obligatory TAM marking and the grammatical encoding of thematic-role assignment are both consequences of a single deeper property, namely the presence of *predication*, defined as an emergent property entailing the clustering of grammatical features pertaining, among others, to TAM marking and thematic-role assignment. Specifically, whereas languages with strongly grammaticalized predication exhibit obligatory TAM marking and grammatical encoding of thematic-role assignment, languages with weak or no grammaticalization of predication are characterized by optional TAM marking and little or no grammatical encoding of thematic-role assignment.

References

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