

Conditionals in Palauan: a Case for Topicalization

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0. Introduction

The aim of this study is to re-examine the syntactic characteristics of conditional expressions in Palauan¹, and to show that Palauan conditionals are syntactically identical with a structure of topicalization. It will be argued that conditionals and topicalization form a natural class in Palauan, with the shared syntactic structure. This view, established independently by analyzing Palauan syntax, can be supported by a cross-linguistic phenomenon where conditionals and topics are marked identically in many unrelated languages (cf. Haiman 1978).

1. Conditionals in Palauan Revisited

1-1. The Problem

In Palauan, there is a syntactic structure which is called *conditional sentence* by Josephs (1975), a foundational descriptive work of Palauan.

a le=ngar er ngii a udud-ek, e ak=mo er a Guam.

If 3'=exist Prep 3SG Nm money-my then 1sg=go Prep Nm Guam

If I had money, I'd go to Guam.'

Josephs mentions that the sentence-initial *a* as in the conditional clause *a le=ngar er ngii a udud-ek* 'If I had money' functions to introduce a conditional clause as a "conjunction word", with its meaning and function analogous to 'if' in English. At first sight, then, the conditional sentence

¹ Palauan is a Western Malayo-Polynesian language spoken in the Republic of Palau, with the estimated number of native speakers being 11,530 (c.f. Census 2000). The basic word order is VOS (Georgopoulos 1986). Eighteen phonemes can be set in Palauan, with six vowels and twelve consonants, which will be shown as follows:

Vowels: /a/, /e/([ɛ]), /e/([ə]), /i/, /o/, /u/.

Consonants: /t/, /k/, /ch/([ʧ]), /b/, /d/, /s/, /m/, /ng/, /r/([r]), /l/, /y/, /w/.

In Palauan, the setting of the phoneme /e/[ə] is justified on existence of a very few minimal pairs. However, in most other cases, [ə] is an allophonic variant of full vowel phonemes: the full vowel phonemes tend to be realized as a reduced variant [ə] when it becomes unstressed with a stress shift. Throughout this study, *e* is used to represent the reduced vowel [ə], the phoneme /e/ ([ə]), and a full vowel phoneme /e/ [ɛ], following Palauan official orthography. For example, in a word *ngelekek* ([ŋələkek^h]) 'my child', the first *e* represents a reduced vowel [ə] (an allophone of /a/), the second *e* represents a phoneme /e/ ([ə]), and the last *e* represents a full vowel phoneme /e/ ([ɛ]).

above appears to correspond quite satisfactorily to the English translation, both in meaning and structure:

Palauan: *a* Conditional Clause *e* Consequent Clause
English: *If* Conditional Clause *then* Consequent Clause

However, this description on a conditional sentence in Palauan is not based on Palauan-internal evidence. Rather, this analysis is totally biased by English translation of Palauan conditional sentences: assuming a one-to-one correspondence between the two sentence structures of Palauan and of English, Josephs “created” a new category (“conjunction word” *a* ‘if’) for the description of the conditional sentence in Palauan².

A brief examination of Palauan-internal evidence reveals that this analysis is questionable: the *a*, which is assumed in Josephs’ description as an equivalent of English ‘if’, otherwise marks nouns in Palauan, as a *noun marker*³. In the following example which is the same as the example (0), there are three *a*’s observed:

1(=0): *a le=ngar er ngii a udud-ek, e ak=mo er a Guam.*
If 3’=exist Prep 3SG Nm money-my then 1sg=go Prep Nm Guam
‘If I had money, I’d go to Guam.’

Josephs assumes that the first *a* is a “conjunction word” meaning ‘if’, and the other two are the noun marker. Thus he treats these as two homophonous morphemes, assuming that the first *a* corresponds to English *if*, and the other *a*’s are noun markers.

1-2. Reconsideration of Conditional Clauses

In this section it will be shown that the ‘conjunction word’ *a* is no more than a noun marker, and that a conditional clause in Palauan is analyzed as a nominalized clause.

Whereas there is no Palauan-internal evidence for assuming a new category (i.e. “conjunction word” meaning ‘if’) for *a*, there are three pieces of evidence for assuming that the ‘conjunction word’ *a* is no more than a noun marker *a*.

- 1) The “conjunction word” *a* is morphologically identical with the noun marker *a*
- 2) There is evidence for the conditional clause being nominalized
- 3) The noun marker *a* can introduce a nominalized clause

² Josephs (1975) aimed to provide a reference grammar with Palauan teachers, as well as linguists (Josephs 1975: xvii). This approach must require some compromise in terms of descriptive accuracy. It is clear then that he deliberately simplified his description on conditionals, as on other phenomena.

³ The noun marker *a* marks lexical nouns, including both common nouns and proper nouns. Also it can mark nominalized clauses. It does not mark pronouns, including personal and demonstrative pronouns. The function of the noun marker *a* still remains to be described, but its primary function is a syntactic one, i.e., to mark an element as a noun. See Josephs (1975) for a more detailed account.

1-2-1. Morphological Identity with the Noun Marker

As is noted in 1-1, the *a* which introduces a conditional clause is identical in form with the noun marker *a*. Note also that in Palauan the form *a* is analyzed as the noun marker in *all* environments but that in conditional clauses.

1-2-2. Conditional Clause as Nominalized Clause

There is direct evidence that the conditional clause is syntactically nominalized: the verb in a conditional clause is always prefixed by a special subject agreement marker, which agrees in person and number with the subject noun, or directly designates the subject, in nominalized clauses.

2(=0): *a le=ngar er ngii a udud-ek, e ak=mo er a Guam.*

If 3'=exist Prep 3SG Nm money-my then 1sg=go Prep Nm Guam
'If I had money, I'd go to Guam.'

This special subject agreement marker⁴ shows a clear morphological parallelism to the possessive suffix (See APPENDIX), and its distribution is restricted to nominalized clauses such as a complement clause in equational structures, relative clauses, and clausal subjects.

For example, in the following examples, (3a) and (4a) both contain nominalized clauses (in bold), which are marked by the subject agreement marker *l=* and *k=* respectively.

3a: *a blai el l=**uruul er ngii.***

Nm house Lig 3'=make Prep 3SG

'The house which he built' (lit. The house of his building)

3b: *tiang el hong.*

this Lig book

'This book'

4a: *ng=**diak k=**usuub.*****

3sg=not.exist 1sg'=study

'I don't study. (lit. The situation that I study does not exist.)'

4b: *ng=**diak a chull.***

⁴ This subject agreement marker has been called "Hypothetical Pronoun" in previous studies such as Josephs (1975). The term "Hypothetical" is, however, problematic, since it would mislead linguists to assume that this element concerns the irrealis mood as opposed to the indicative mood. This inadequate terminology is mainly based on the fact that the element in question appears in conditionals. However, it also appears in a variety of environments which cannot be associated with "Hypothetical" or irrealis mood (such as a topicalized structure and a relative clause structure, etc.). It is more reasonable to have a purely syntactic analysis that it appears in subordinate clauses (DeWolf 1988), especially nominalized clauses.

3sg=not.exist Nm rain
 ‘It will not rain. (lit. The rain will not exist.)’

In (3a), the nominalized clause appears following the ligature *el*⁵, which normally introduces nouns (as in the example (3b)). It is, then, reasonable to assume that the *l=uruul er ngii* ‘he built’ is syntactically nominalized, and can fill the slot introduced by *el*.

In (4a), the nominalized clause appears following the verb *diak* ‘does not exist’, as the third person subject, agreeing with the subject agreement *hg=*. The position in which the clausal subject in (4a) appears is also filled by a lexical noun as in (4b). Again, it is reasonable to assume that the *k=usuub* in (4a) is syntactically a noun, just as *a chull* in (4b).

Given that a conditional clause is marked by the special subject agreement, it is highly probable that the conditional clause is also a nominalized clause. Otherwise we would have to admit only one exception where the special subject agreement does not appear in a nominalized clause, but appears in an adverbial clause.

1-2-3. Noun Marker and Nominalized Clause

As noted by Georgopoulos (1986) and Lemaréchal (1991), the noun marker *a* can introduce (nominalized) clauses, as well as genuine nouns. In the following example, *menguiu er a hong* ‘read the book’ is nominalized, and introduced by the noun marker *a*.

5: *a Tosio a menguiu er a hong.*
 Nm Tosio Nm read Prep Nm book
 ‘Tosio reads the book.’ (lit. ‘Tosio is a book-reading man’)

This sentence is syntactically analyzed as an equational sentence, schematically represented as *a NP₁ a NP₂*, with the *NP₂* being the nominalized verbal clause. Thus it is syntactically possible that the conditional clause as in the example (0=1) is nominalized and introduced by the noun marker *a*. At least syntactically, if the conditional clause is nominalized, there is no need to set a special morpheme *a* which exclusively introduces a conditional clause.

1-2-4. Summary

Based on the above mentioned three pieces of evidence, this study claims that a conditional clause in Palauan must be syntactically analyzed as a noun (nominalized clause), whose status is reflected in the presence of the noun marker *a* and the special subject agreement. Thus the conditional sentence structure as assumed in this study may be schematically shown below.

⁵ The ligature *el* functions to connect two noun phrases, schematically shown as *NP₁ el NP₂*. Either *NP* can be the head, i.e. *NP₁* may modify *NP₂* or vice versa, though there are several syntactic restrictions. Note that in the example (3a) and (3b) above, the two *NP*s are treated as the head and the modifier respectively.

Text 1: Teriong, Herman and Riosang Salvador. (n. d.)

Text 2: The Palau Society of Historians. ed. (1996).

All of these materials contain stories or fables. To create a corpus, these materials have been transcribed to follow the orthography of the present author. Also, morphological analyses have been given, with glosses and morpheme boundaries as defined by the present author.

In this study, the analyses on frequencies and tokens will be based on this corpus as a whole, not on each text. The total amount of sentences and words in the corpus will be listed in the following table.

Table 1. Corpus details

	sentences	words
Text 1	224	2463
Text 2	460	5809
Total	684	8272

3. Analysis

3-1. General Observation

There were 134 tokens of the structure whose sentence-initial element is a nominalized clause or a genuine noun. The results are given in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Temporal NP structure in the corpus

Sentence-initial element	Token	Frequency
Nominalized clause	76	57% ⁶
Noun	58	43%
Total	134	100%

The striking fact is that a genuine noun phrase rather than a nominalized clause appears quite often. The following examples are from the corpus, all of which involves a sentence-initial noun phrase.

- 6: *a del-rir e ng=dirrek el di mle mesobil.*
 Nm mother-Poss3pl then 3sg=also Lig only was unmarried
 ‘**Their mother**, she was also unmarried.’

⁶ Henceforth, any value of frequency will be round off to one decimal place, and will be represented as its percent value.

7: *a irechar e te=mla er ngii a reteuid el odam.*
 Nm earlier.times then 3pl=existed Prep 3SG Nm seven Lig brother
 ‘**Once upon a time**, there lived seven brothers.’

8: *a Reklai er a l=orrenge a cheldech-dech-al a Dechedech*
 Nm Reklai Prep Nm 3'=listen Nm talk-Poss3 Nm Dechedech

e ng=ko er a kmal chub-r-ang.
 then 3sg=a.kind.of very have.pity.on-os3sg-Inch
 ‘**Reklai, listening to Dechedech’s talk**, was very pitiful to him’

The already familiar type of structure, i.e. that which involves a nominalized clause as in conditionals have also been frequently found in the corpus; however, unlike Josephs’ description, the majority of the nominalized clauses is *not* a conditional clause, but designates an actually happened event:

9: *a le=bo-cha er a beluu e a bai a meseked.*
 Nm 3'=go-Inch Prep Nm land then Nm bai Nm be.crowded
 ‘**When he arrived in the land**, the *bai* (a special meeting place) was filled with old people.’

This is clearly not a conditional expression, since both the nominalized clause and the clause that follows it designate the past event. An examination of this will be given in detail in 3-2-1 below.

Henceforth, the two types of structure which have been observed in the corpus, i.e. that whose initial noun phrase is a nominalized clause and that whose initial noun phrase is a genuine noun rather than a nominalized clause, will be called TYPE 1 and TYPE 2 respectively.

TYPE1: *a Nominalized Clause e...*

TYPE 2: *a Noun e...*

As will be shown in later sections, these two types of structure show striking similarities, in terms of functional characteristics of the sentence-initial element introduced by *a*. In the following two sections in 3-2, the characteristics of TYPE 1 and TYPE 2 will be further examined, with focus on their functional characteristics.

3-2. TYPE 1 and TYPE 2: Functional Analysis

3-2-1. TYPE 1

In 3-1, it has been briefly noted that TYPE 1 is not reserved for conditionals, but frequently used for non-conditional, temporal expressions, too.

In the following table, all the tokens of TYPE 1 (76 tokens) are sorted by the function of the sentence-initial nominalized clause.

Table 3. Nominalized clause of TYPE 1

Nominalized clause of TYPE 1	Tokens	Frequency
Temporal expression	62	82%
Conditional	8	11%
Others	6	7%
Total	76	100%

Below, sentences of TYPE 1 which designate temporal expressions will be given from the corpus. In each example, the nominalized clause and its corresponding translation are in bold.

10: *a l=omes e a rubak el rokui*
 Nm 3'=see then Nm old.person all

a di chemau a chels-el a bai.
 Nm just face.towards Nm inside-its Nm bai

‘**When he looked**, all the old people was facing towards the inside of the *bai*.’

11: *a bo el chelellakl e l-orrenges*
 Nm go Lig be.quiet then 3'-listen
e a Reklai a mengedecheduch.
 then Nm Reklai Nm talk

‘**When he became quiet and tried to listen**, (he found that) the chief was talking.’

12: *a le=bo er a bek el tuangel*
 Nm 3'=go Prep Nm each Lig door
e ng=diak a rubak el ko er a chisngekl.
 then 3sg=not.exist Nm old.person Lig just turn.to.look

‘**Each time he went to the entrance**, there were no old people who turned to look (at him).’

Josephs (1975) described, in defining conditional clauses, that at the moment of utterance, the condition has not been satisfied, and the speaker is viewing the idea as a possibility (Josephs 1975: 383-4). In the corpus, however, conditional clauses in such a sense were rather scarce (only 11%). On the contrary, temporal expressions as shown above were the majority (82%). Semantic ranges or definition of conditionals being aside, it suffices here to note that TYPE 1 frequently designates temporal expressions.

3-2-2. TYPE 2

It is obvious, according to the corpus, that there is a parallel between TYPE 1 and TYPE 2 in terms of functional characteristic of the sentence-initial NP: in the corpus, the majority of the sentence-initial NPs of TYPE 2 is a temporal phrase, as in the case of TYPE 1. Of all the 58 tokens of TYPE 2 in the corpus, 45 tokens have the sentence-initial noun phrase as a temporal noun phrase. The results are shown below:

Table 4. Topic of TYPE 2

Topic of TYPE 1	Token	Frequency
Temporal	45	78%
Locative	5	9%
Subject	4	7%
Others	4	7%
Total	58	100%

Below, sentences of TYPE 2 which designate temporal expressions will be given from the corpus. In each example, the sentence-initial noun phrase and its corresponding translation are in bold.

13: *a tang er a kesus er a bo-chang el omesoil*
 Nm one Prep Nm night Prep Nm go-Inch Lig have.supper

e ngikang el kot el klou a dul-ang er a del-al el kmo,
 then this Lig first Lig be.old Nm say-os3sg Prep Nm mother-his as.follows
 ‘**One night during eating dinner**, the eldest (brother) said to his mother that... ’

14: *tiang el bong el kukuk⁷ e ng=ulemkokl el moch-ang*
 this Lig go Lig morning then 3sg=rise Lig go-Inch

e kutmekl-ii e merol-ang.
 then get.ready-os3sg then leave-Inch

‘**This morning** he got up early to get himself ready and started to leave (home).’

15: *tiakid e ngikang el rubak a liluut*
 here then this Lig old.person Nm did.again

el chisangekl el mes-ang e nguu a med-al.
 Lig turn.to.look Lig see-os3sg then remove Nm door-its

‘**At this moment**, this old person turned to look again and saw him, and opened the door.’

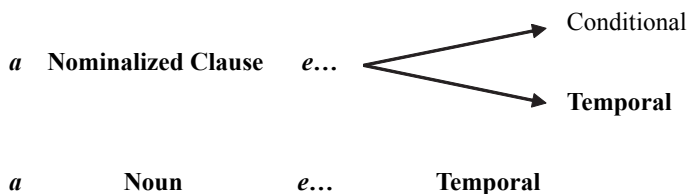
16: *a omerol-el el mong remei e ng=ko er a*
 Nm trip-his Lig go.home then 3sg=a.kind.of

melilt er ngii er a uldesu-el el kmo...
 choose Prep 3SG Prep Nm idea-his as.follows

‘**On his way home**, he tried choosing the one based on his idea, which is as follows...’

3-2-3. Summary and Discussion

It is clear from the above two sections that TYPE 1 and TYPE 2 share one functional characteristic. That is, in both TYPE 1 and TYPE 2, the sentence-initial element introduced by *a* tends to designate a temporal expression.



Thus the following basic schematic structure can be set in Palauan, irrespective of whether

⁷ As noted in the footnote 2 demonstrative and other pronouns are not marked by the noun marker *a*. Hence this study counts examples like (14) and (15) as TYPE 2, assuming that in these examples, the underlying structure is *a NP*, without an actual occurrence of *a*.

the sentence-initial element is a nominalized clause or a genuine noun:

 NP e...
(Temporal)

Henceforth, this structure will be called **Temporal NP structure**.

When the NP slot is filled by a nominalized clause, it tends to designate a temporal expression roughly translated into the *when*-clause in English; it can also be interpreted as a conditional, but not always so. It is evident that in Palauan, temporal expressions and conditionals may be identically marked by this particular syntactic structure. Moreover, in terms of frequency, conditional expressions must be a secondary usage rather than the primary usage of the Temporal NP structure, since conditional expressions were just a small part of all the examples which involve this syntactic structure, the majority of which is basically used for temporal expressions. Unlike Josephs (1975), therefore, this study claims that a conditional expression in Palauan is encoded by a structure which basically encodes temporal expressions, rather than by its own peculiar sentence structure.

When, on the other hand, the NP slot is filled by a noun, it tends to designate a temporal expression, with a few exceptional examples such as subject and locatives (See Table4).

4. Conditionals and Topicalization

4-1. Introduction

Thus far, it has been clarified that the conditional sentence structure as described by Josephs (1975) can be re-defined as that involving a nominalized clause, which is shared by temporal expressions. Thus Temporal NP structure has been assumed, which subsumes conditionals and temporals.

In order to further clarify and properly describe conditionals in Palauan, we now have to examine more of the syntactic as well as functional characteristics of the Temporal NP structure. One such way would be to pay attention to other temporal expressions in Palauan, and to note in what way the temporal expressions with the Temporal NP structure are syntactically and functionally different from those with other alternative structures.

In the following section (4-2), it will be shown that the temporal expression in Palauan involves two syntactic patterns: one is that the temporal phrase is placed sentence-initially, as in the Temporal NP structure; the other is that it is placed sentence-finally. In 4-3, it will be examined what constraint or rule is working on the selection between the two possible temporal expressions, and it will be argued that the temporal expression which involves the Temporal NP structure is a topicalized structure where the temporal noun phrase is placed sentence-initially as the sentential topic.

Thus conditionals in Palauan, which is encoded by the Temporal NP structure, will be

claimed to be syntactically identical with *temporal topicalization*.

4-2. Temporal NP Structure and Other Temporal Expressions

4-2-1. Two Possible Patterns of Temporal Expressions

There are two possible ways to encode temporal expressions in Palauan, depending on the syntactic position of the temporal phrase: pre-verbally (sentence-initially) or post-verbally (basically sentence-finally).

It does not mean, however, that the sentence-initial temporal phrase can freely put sentence-finally, or vice versa. That is, there is a syntactic restriction on the selection of either type, which will be shown below.

In the following pair of examples, the (17a) is the basic sentence structure. Note that Palauan basic word order is VOS (Georgopoulos 1986). The temporal phrase *er a elii* ‘yesterday’ is placed sentence-finally (marked by the preposition *er*). Unlike, say, English, it is impossible to put this temporal prepositional phrase sentence-initially.

17a: *ak=mlo er a skuul er a elii.*
1sg=went Prep Nm school Prep Nm yesterday
‘I went to school yesterday.’

17b: **er a elii ak=mlo er a skuul.*
Prep Nm yesterday 1sg=went Prep Nm school

To put a temporal phrase sentence-initially, the Temporal NP structure must be used instead. Thus the following example, as opposed to the example (17b), is fully grammatical.

17c: *a elii e ak=mlo er a skuul.*
Nm yesterday then 1sg=went Prep Nm school
‘Yesterday, I went to school.’

This restriction is also true of the temporal *clause*, as in:

18a: *ak=ulmes er ngii er se er a⁸ k=bo er a skuul.*
1sg=saw Prep 3SG Prep when 1sg'=go Prep Nm school
‘I saw him when I went to school.’

18b: *se⁹ er a k=bo er a skuul e ak=ulmes er ngii.*

⁸ *se er a* as a whole constitutes a syntactic unit, which introduces a temporal clause (only for the past event).

⁹ *se* ‘that’ is a demonstrative pronoun, so the noun marker *a* cannot mark it.

when 1sg'=go Prep Nm school then 1sg=saw Prep 3SG
 'When I went to school, I saw him.'

The question arises, then, what is the functional difference between the two constructions. In particular, we would want to have a clear view of what is meant by putting temporal noun phrases or clauses sentence-initially by using the Temporal NP structure, whence the resultant sentence becomes a non-VOS, marked sentence structure in Palauan.

4-2-2. Functional View of the Temporal NP structure

In terms of functional view of a sentence, it is reasonable to assume that the sentence-initial element bears a sentential topic, i.e. what the utterance is about (Foley and Van Valin 1985: 124). More specifically, the topic can be characterized as an element which “sets a spatial, temporal, or individual domain within which the main predication holds” (Chafe 1976: 50). The most natural topics are, as it were, “setting noun phrases” (Foley and Van Valin 1985: 125), which includes temporals and locatives, as a point of reference of the whole sentence. Thus the sentence-initial temporal noun phrase in the Temporal NP structure is argued to be the sentential topic, as a “setting noun phrase”.

This is most clear when we consider a situation where any utterance can be new information. In such a case, “setting noun phrases” are naturally selected to be the topic, as the most unmarked choice. For example, when a story or a narrative begins, the sentence-initial element tends to be locatives or temporals, as in English *Once upon a time* or Japanese *Mukashi mukashi* ‘once upon a time’. In the following example, which is taken from an oral text of Palauan collected by the present author, the story begins with the Temporal NP structure, with the sentence-initial temporal noun phrase as the “setting noun phrase”:

19: *a irechar e ng=mla er ngii a chad...*
 Nm early.times then 3sg=existed Prep 3SG Nm person
 ‘**Once upon a time**, there was a person...’

Indeed, the TEXT 1 of this study begins with the following sentence, which is the Temporal NP structure:

20(=7): *a irechar e te=mla er ngii a reteuid el odam.*
 Nm earlier.times then 3pl=existed Prep 3SG Nm seven Lig brother
 ‘**Once upon a time**, there lived seven brothers.’

Thus it is claimed that the Temporal NP structure, as opposed to the corresponding structure which puts the temporal noun phrase sentence-finally, is used to set the temporal noun phrase as the

sentential topic.

4-3. Temporal NP Structure as a Topicalized Structure

In this section, it will be shown that the Temporal NP structure is syntactically defined as topicalization. It will also be described how the Temporal NP structure is different from other types of topicalization in Palauan, with focus on syntactic structure and topic type.

Before proceeding any further, it is necessary to introduce the basic, non-topicalized structure and topicalized structures in Palauan.

4-3-1. Basic Sentence Structure in Palauan

As noted in 4-2-1, the basic (i.e. non-topicalized) word order of Palauan is VOS. In the following transitive example, the verb carrying a subject agreement proclitic and an object agreement suffix (schematized as **s=V-o** below, see also Shimoji 2005) comes first, followed by two arguments, i.e. the object *a ringo* ‘apple’ and the subject *a Droteo* ‘Droteo’, bearing a VOS structure.

21: *ng=kol-ii* *a ringo* *a Droteo.*
3sg=eat-os3sg Nm apple Nm Droteo
s=V-o **O** **S**
‘Droteo will eat up the apple.’

The most crucial point here is that in the basic sentence structure as in, (21) the verb (with the subject agreement) must come first.

To bear a fully grammatical sentence in which a noun phrase is placed sentence-initially (therefore precedes the verb), it is necessary to use a syntactically marked structure. When this occurs to put the topic noun phrase sentence-initially, it is called *topicalization* in Palauan.

In this sense, the Temporal NP structure is readily analyzed as topicalization, since it is the alternative way of putting the temporal phrase sentence-initially as the topic, with the removal of the preposition *er* and with the occurrence of another morphosyntactically marked structure, i.e., an insertion of *e* between the sentence-initial NP and the rest of the sentence.

V.....er a NP (Unmarked sentence structure)
a NP e..... (Topicalization)

In the following section, this analysis will be further examined, by comparing the Temporal NP structure with other topicalized structures.

4-3-3. Topicalized Structures in Palauan

Thus far previous studies have revealed that there are two kinds of topicalized structures,

depending on whether the topicalized element is subject or non-subject. Let us take up the following example (22a) as the basic VOS structure from which topicalized structures may be derived.

22a: *ng=menguiu er a hong er a delmerab a Tosio.*
 3sg=read Prep Nm book Prep Nm room Nm Tosio
 ‘Tosio reads the book in the room.’

In the above example, the verb carrying subject agreement comes first, and the three potential topic noun phrases, namely, *a hong* ‘book’, *a delmerab* ‘room’, and *a Tosio* ‘Tosio’, follow it in this order. If topicalization occurs on each of these potential topic noun phrases, the following three topicalized structures are obtained.

[Subject Topicalization]

22b: *a Tosio a menguiu er a hong er a delmerab.*
 Nm Tosio Nm read Prep Nm book Prep Nm room
 ‘As for Tosio, he reads the book in the room.’

[Non-Subject Topicalization]

22c: *a hong a l=onguiu er ngii er a delmerab a Tosio.*
 Nm book Nm 3'=read Prep 3SG Prep Nm room Nm Tosio
 ‘As for the book, Tosio reads it in the room.’

22d: *a delmerab a l=onguiu er a hong er ngii a Tosio.*
 Nm room Nm 3'=read Prep Nm book Nm 3SG Nm Tosio
 ‘As for the room, Tosio reads the book there.’

Note that in each derived sentence a topic noun phrase precedes the verb, and the verb is marked by the noun marker *a* (whereby we know that the verb is nominalized). Thus each of these non-VOS structures is characterized as an equational sentence, as briefly noted in 1-2-3 for the example (5). This equational structure involves a complex clause structure *a NP₁ a NP₂* (cf. Lemaréchal 1991), in which *a NP₁* is the topic noun phrase, and *a NP₂* is a nominalized subordinate clause.

a NP₁ *a NP₂*
 Topic [Nominalized Clause]

On the other hand, there is one conspicuous difference between subject topicalization (as in

the examples (22b)) and non-subject topicalization (as in the examples (22c) and (22d)): the presence or absence of subject agreement on the verb. In subject topicalization the verb does not carry any subject agreement marker, while in non-subject topicalization the verb carries subject agreement marker. In the examples (22c) and (22d), the special subject agreement marker which indicates nominalization of the clause (see 1-2-2) appears (*l=* on the verb *l=onguiu* ‘read’).

In summary, the following two major patterns of topicalized structures have been assumed in previous studies (for further discussions of topicalization, see Lemaréchal 1991; Shimoji 2004).

a NP *a* [V.....] (NP: Subject)
a NP *a* [AGR= V] (NP: Non-Subject)

N.B. []: indicates a nominalized clause

AGR=: subject agreement marker

4-3-4. Temporal NP structure as the third Type of Topicalization

Now we will go back to the Temporal NP structure. There is a piece of evidence that the Temporal NP structure is the third type of topicalized structure in Palauan.

According to previous studies (Georgopoulos 1986; Josephs 1975; Lemaréchal 1991), the Non-subject topicalization must involve *any* non-subject arguments. It follows then that in the following example, the two non-subject arguments (in bold) must be topicalized by the Non-subject topicalization structure.

23a: *ng=mlo er a skuul a Droteo er a elii.*
 1sg=went Prep Nm school Nm Droteo Prep Nm yesterday
 ‘Droteo went **to school yesterday.**’

This is not the case, however. While the goal noun phrase *a skuul* ‘school’ must be topicalized by the Non-subject topicalization, the temporal noun phrase *a elii* ‘yesterday’ cannot be topicalized by this structure.

23b: **a elii a le=blo er a skuul er ngii.*
 Nm yesterday Nm 3'=went Prep Nm school Prep 3SG

To topicalize temporal noun phrases, it is necessary to recourse to another structure, which has never been described in previous studies, i. e., the Temporal NP structure.

From the fact that temporal noun phrases cannot be topicalized by the Non-subject topicalization structure, and that the only way to put the temporal noun phrase sentence-initially as the topic is to use the Temporal NP structure, it is reasonable to assume that the Temporal NP structure is the third distinct type of topicalized structure in Palauan, with its distinct role of

topicalizing temporal noun phrases.

Table 5. Systematic Distribution of Topicalization

	Topic Type		
	Subject	Object, Locative, etc.	Temporal
Subject Topicalization Structure	○	×	×
Non-subject Topicalization Structure	×	○	×
Temporal NP structure	△	△	○

In the above table, △ indicates that there are a few occurrences observed in the corpus (see Table 4 in 3-2-2).

The Temporal NP structure is, a distinct type of topicalized structure in Palauan syntax, comprising a systematic distribution with the other two types of topicalization. The topicalization by way of the Temporal NP structure is thus *temporal topicalization*.

Now it is possible to say that conditional expressions, which is coded by the Temporal NP structure, are syntactically identical with temporal topicalization. In Palauan, therefore, there is no need to set a special syntactic structure for conditionals as in example (0). It is appropriate to assume that conditionals as in example (0) *share* the syntactic characteristics with temporal topicalization.

5. Conclusions

In this study, the syntactic re-examination of conditionals in Palauan has been given. Throughout this study, the following three findings have been gained concerning conditionals in Palauan:

- 1) Syntactically, a conditional sentence in Palauan involves nominalized clause structure, with the sentence-initial *a* being no more than a noun marker.

This new analysis enabled us to note the parallelism between conditionals and temporals in Palauan.

- 2) It has been shown based on the corpus analysis that the structure involving a nominalized clause (TYPE 1) and that involving a noun (TYPE 2) can be syntactically as well as functionally parallel, and subsumed under the common structure, i.e. Temporal NP structure.

The Temporal NP structure basically encodes temporal expressions, and that conditionals are at most the secondary usage, of that particular structure in terms of frequency.

- 3) A further examination of the Temporal NP structure has revealed that it should be analyzed as a distinct structure of *temporal topicalization* in Palauan syntax.

Because conditionals are encoded by the Temporal NP structure, they are shown to be syntactically identical with the structure of temporal topicalization. In Palauan, the conditional clause and the temporal topic are marked identically.

In Palauan, contra previous studies' assumption, there is no need to set a distinct syntactic structure exclusively for conditionals. Rather, Palauan-internal evidence strongly suggests that a conditional sentence and temporal topicalization are syntactically identical. They form a natural class in Palauan, with the shared syntactic structure.

ADDENDA

This study provides a new case for a cross-linguistic claim that “conditionals are topics” (Haiman 1978; Schiffrin 1992). This study has claimed that in Palauan, the Temporal NP structure, which encodes conditionals, is syntactically a distinct type of topicalized structure. This means that a conditional in Palauan is syntactically identical with (temporal) topicalization. Researchers such as Haiman (1978) and Schiffrin (1992) note that conditional clauses and topics are marked identically in a number of unrelated languages. This study, then, supports this cross-linguistic observation. In Palauan, the conditional clause is morphosyntactically marked by three distinct ways: the noun marker *a*, the sentence-initial position of the clause, and the following co-ordinate marker *e*. All of these are shared by the topic of temporal noun phrases.

Abbreviations

Inch: Inchoative suffix

Lig: Ligature

Nm: Noun marker

os: Object pronoun suffix (which is co-referential with the object noun phrase, or directly designates the undergoer)

Prep: Preposition

1sg: 1st person singular Non-Emphatic Pronoun (proclitic pronoun)

1sg?: Hypothetical Pronoun

1SG: 1st person singular Emphatic Pronoun (independent pronoun)

-: affix boundary

=: clitic boundary

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APPENDIX: the Pronominal Elements in Palauan

		NEP	EP	HP	POSS	OS
Human	1sg	<i>ak</i>	<i>ngak</i>	<i>k(e)=</i>	<i>-k</i>	<i>-ak/ -kak</i>
	2sg	<i>ke</i>	<i>kau</i>	<i>chom(e)=</i>	<i>-m</i>	<i>-au/ -kau</i>
	3sg	<i>ng</i>	<i>ngii</i>	<i>l(e)=</i>	<i>-l</i>	<i>-ii/ -ang/ -ar/ -ir/ -ur</i>
	1pl(incl.)	<i>kede</i>	<i>kid</i>	<i>d(e)=</i>	<i>-d</i>	<i>-id/ -kid</i>
	1pl(excl.)	<i>aki</i>	<i>kemam</i>	<i>kim(e)=</i>	<i>-(m)am</i>	<i>-emam/ -kemam</i>
	2pl	<i>kom</i>	<i>kemiu</i>	<i>chom(e)=</i>	<i>-(m)iu</i>	<i>-emiu/ -kemiu</i>
	3pl	<i>te</i>	<i>tir</i>	<i>l(e)=</i>	<i>-rir</i>	<i>-terir</i>
Non-Human	3sg	<i>ng</i>	<i>ngii</i>	<i>l(e)=</i>	<i>-l</i>	<i>-ii/ -a</i>
	3pl					ϕ

NEP: Non-Emphatic Pronoun (subject agreement proclitic); EP: Emphatic Pronoun (oblique case independent pronoun); HP: Hypothetical Pronoun (special subject agreement proclitic which indicates nominalization of the clause in which it appears); POSS: Possessor suffix; OS: Object Pronoun Suffix.

Conditionals in Palauan: a Case for Topicalization

下地 理則

本研究の目的は、パラオ語における条件文の統語的特徴を再考し、これが主題化構文と統語的に同一であることを示すことである。

本研究は、まず、これまで条件文に対してなされてきた統語分析を再考することから議論を始める。パラオ語の条件文はこれまで、独自の統語的特徴を持った構文であると記述されてきたが、本研究は、パラオ語の言語内事実をもとに、統語的には条件節部分が名詞節であることを示す。

このように条件文の統語構造を再定義すると、これまで条件文とは関連がないと思われてきたほかの構文との同一性が明らかとなる。本研究は、条件文と同一の統語構造を持つ構文がコーパスにおいてどのように現れ、どういう共通点があるかを検証する。その結果、条件文と同一の構造を持つ構文は典型的には、時間を示す要素を文頭に置く主題化構文であることを示す。

パラオ語において条件文と主題化構文が同一の統語的標示を受けることと、実際のテキストにおける頻度の点で主題化構文が圧倒的に優勢であることを根拠に、本研究では、パラオ語の記述において条件文という特別な統語構造を持つ構文を設定する必要はなく、むしろ主題化構文の特殊な例として扱うべきであると結論する。