

# Spatial Expressions in Balinese and Rongga

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This paper explores differences and similarities of spatial systems in two Austronesian languages, Balinese and Rongga (central Flores, 4,000 speakers). It discusses how spatial expressions in Balinese and Rongga are highly significant linguistically and culturally (high frequency of use and related belief systems regarding sacred/good/bad locations). The paper also discusses their typology ('absolute', 'relative' and 'intrinsic' as outlined in Levinson 2003). Certain spatial expressions in both languages were originally geo-centric, based on the local landscapes. They are therefore in a sense 'relative'. However, they have developed into a system which is 'absolute' to a certain extent. Finally, the paper looks at the morphosyntactic features of the spatial expressions in the two languages. Typologically, Balinese is agglutinating whereas Rongga is isolating. Spatial expressions in Balinese are more elaborate than those in Rongga in terms of the available distinctions (main cardinal and inter-cardinal) and their morphology.