

East Asian ethnolinguistic prehistory and
the Austronesian language family in relation
to the East Asian linguistic phylum

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The prevailing theory with regard to the Austronesian homeland is that the language family spread from Formosa. This theory is supported by linguistic, population genetic and archaeological evidence. The origins and historical development of this idea in linguistic scholarship is recapitulated. The long-distance linguistic relationships that have been proposed between Austronesian and other language families in Asia would reflect events and situations that lay at a time depth that lay further back in the past than the dispersal of the Austronesian language family from the Formosan homeland. Ostapirat's Austro-Tai theory and Starosta's East Asian theory will be presented, and the wider ramifications of these linguistic theories will be discussed in light of population genetic evidence and the history of the peopling of the Indo-Pacific.

Recommended reading

van Driem, George. 2021. *Ethnolinguistic Prehistory: The Peopling of the World from the Perspective of Language, Genes and Material Culture*. Leiden: Brill.