

Intraseasonal and Interannual Modes of Atmosphere-Ocean System Over the Tropical Western Pacific

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1. Introduction

The importance of the wave-CISK mechanism on the 30-60 day oscillation has been verified by the results of numerical models (Hayashi and Sumi, 1986; Hayashi and Golder, 1986; Lau and Peng, 1987; Yamagata, 1987, *etc.*). Since the intraseasonal oscillation was fairly well simulated using numerical models in which the sea surface temperature (SST) was fixed, it has been understood that this oscillation is an atmospheric phenomenon which is excited by the dynamics of the tropical atmosphere itself and there is no need to regard it as being an air-sea coupled system. However, there still remain some differences between the simulated and observed oscillations. One of them is the shift of simulated intraseasonal oscillations toward higher frequencies as compared to those observed. In recent numerical model studies, Miyahara (1987) estimated the effect of SST on tropical intraseasonal oscillation by varying the CISK parameter as functions of longitude and latitude. Sui and Lau (1989) shows that the lower boundary forcing due to heat flux from the ocean surface destabilizes the mobile wave-CISK mode. Thus some studies focus on the role of tropical SST as a lower boundary in destabilizing the intraseasonal mode.

The existence of the intraseasonal variations of tropical SST is already reported by Krishnamurti *et al.* (1988) and so on. We further found that the tropical SST exhibits a coupling with outgoing longwave radiation (OLR) on the same time scale with a phase difference of 10-20 days (Murakami, 1988; Kawamura, 1988). This fact is suggestive of not only the importance of the dependence of the 30-60 day oscillation on SST but also air-sea interaction in this time scale. It is still uncertain, however, how the air-sea coupling in the intraseasonal time scale is different from that in the interannual time scale which is represented by the ENSO and QBO.

The objective of this research, therefore, is to investigate phase relationships among SST, zonal wind at 850mb and high-cloud cover (HCC), providing a measure of active convection similar to OLR, in the warm pool region of the western Pacific on intraseasonal and interannual time scales. We extracted dominant phase relationship of the air-sea coupling in two time scales, using the complex EOF (CEOF) analysis.

2. SST and eastward-propagating intraseasonal mode

We first examine the relationships between the SST over the western Pacific and the eastward-propagating large-scale disturbance having an 30-60 day mode. The 10-day averaged SST data used were regularly collected by the Japan Meteorological Agency. Figure 1a indicates the climatological mean OLR field, which was obtained from the NMC/NOAA, for the northern summer (May-



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October) over the period from 1979 through 1984. Deep convective areas are observed in a belt extending from the Indian to the western Pacific Ocean. We divide the equatorial western Pacific sector (0° - 10° N, 130° E- 180°), where SST is very warm, into five blocks (10° latitude by 10° longitude) as shown in Fig. 1b and compute lag-correlations between 10-day mean SST and OLR averaged over each region during the above period. Figure 2 depicts the spatial distributions of lag-correlation coefficients between the tropical OLR anomalies from the Indian Ocean through the central Pacific and the SST in a key region (0° - 10° N, 130 - 160° E), where significant correlations were detected. Here negative lag denotes that the variation in OLR precedes that in SST and one lag is equivalent to 10 days. Weak positive OLR anomalies cover the key region and extend to the central Pacific at lags of -2 and -1. On the other hand, negative anomalies are located in the region from the Indian Ocean to the maritime continent and progress eastward from negative through positive lags. At a lag of +2 (20 days), significant negative anomalies expand into the equatorial western Pacific. The above results show that the SST over the equatorial western Pacific and the eastward-propagating disturbance interact with an intraseasonal time scale, and that the SST is above normal to the east of the eastward-propagating 30-60 day mode disturbances.

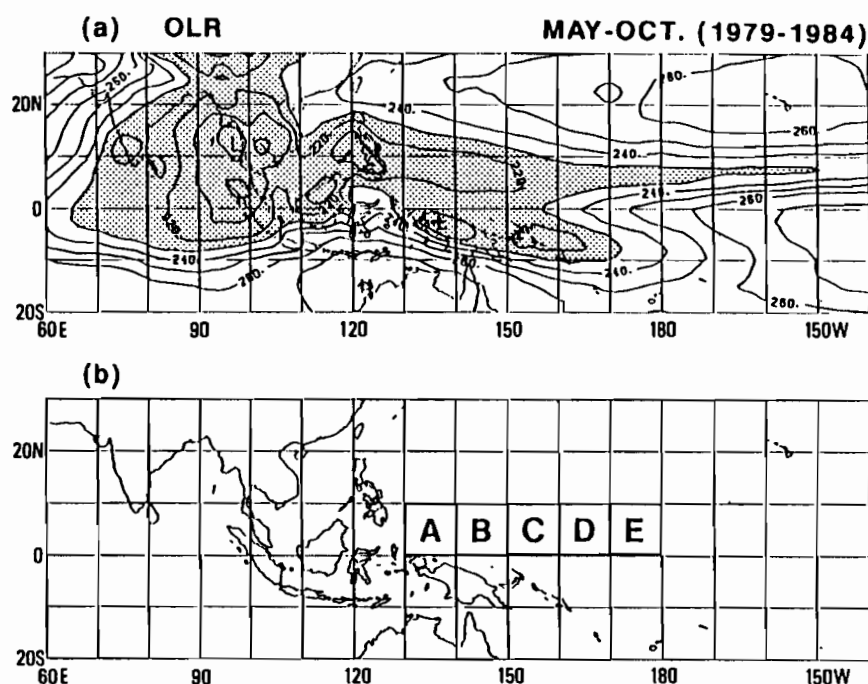


Fig. 1 (a) Climatological mean OLR field for the northern summer over the period from 1979 through 1984. The contour interval is 10Wm^{-2} and areas less than 230Wm^{-2} are shaded, indicating the most active convection. (b) Location of five regions selected in computing lag-correlations between the 10-day mean SST and OLR.

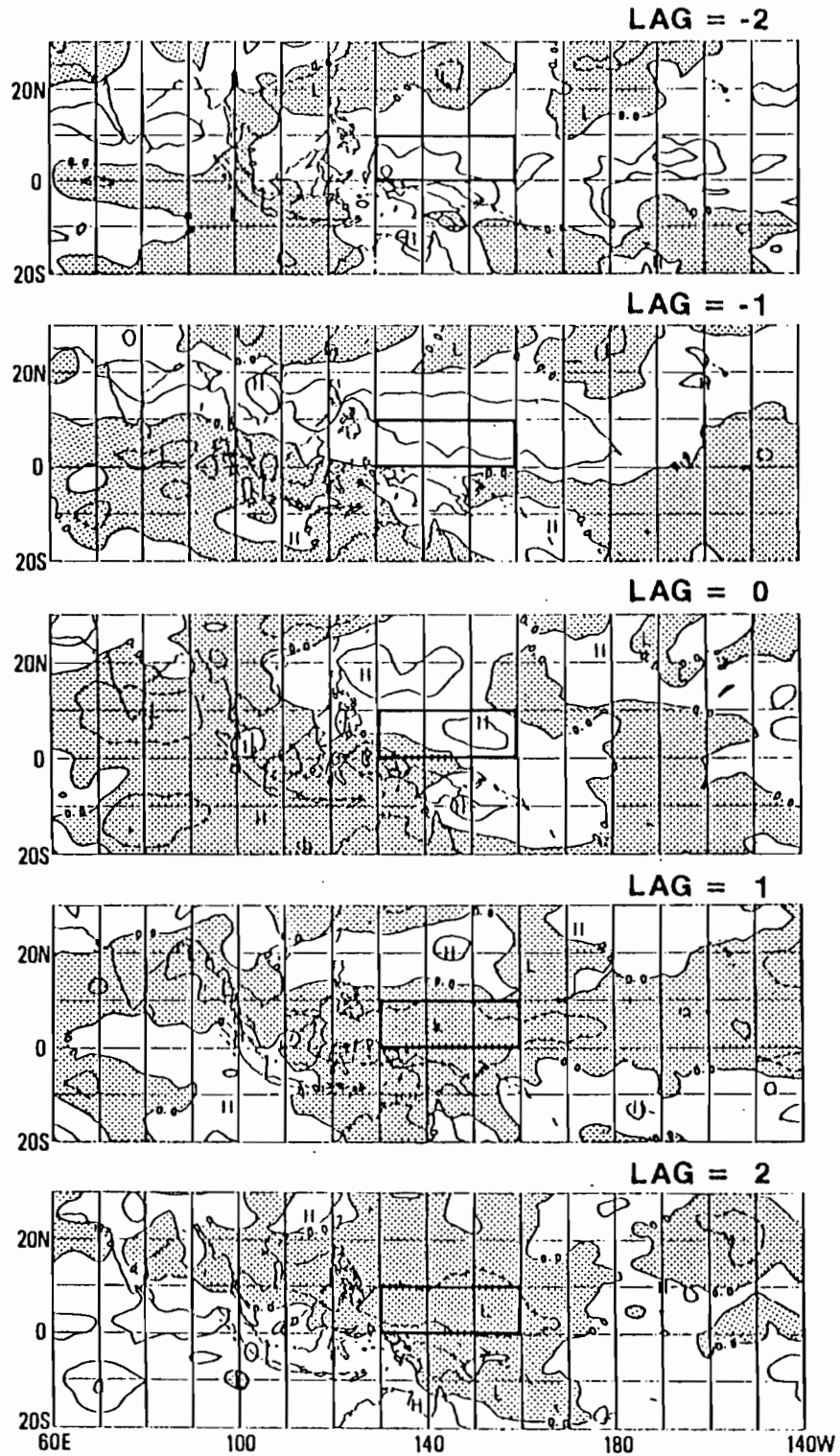


Fig. 2 Lag-correlation patterns between the OLR anomalies in tropical regions and SST anomalies in the key region (0° - 10° N, 130 - 160° E) shown by the rectangle. Positive lag implies that the variation in SST precedes that in OLR and one lag is equivalent to 10 days. The contour interval is 0.2 and negative values are shaded.

Although Emanuel (1987) and Neelin *et al.* (1987) suggested that evaporation-wind feedback mechanism leads to the eastward propagation of intraseasonal disturbance using numerical model which SST is fixed, the high SST located to the east of eastward-propagating disturbance also provides a favorable condition for the disturbance to propagate eastward. It can be considered that the intraseasonal variations are easily modified by air-sea interaction and as a result have spectral peaks in wide (30 to 60 day) period range if we take account of such an air-sea interaction as the reduced incoming solar radiation and active turbulent mixing accompanying the large-scale disturbance result in a decrease of SST.

Figure 3 displays the time series of the 10-day mean SST (solid line) and OLR (dashed line) averaged over the key region for the northern summer (May-October) during the 6 year period (1979-1984). The coupling of SST and OLR on the intraseasonal time scale is more notable in the northern summer during 1979 when the 30-60 day oscillation of tropical convection was dominant. The SST in the key region fluctuates between 29.0 and 29.5°C during this period. In contrast, although the SST was above 29.5°C during 1981, the 30-60 day oscillations in both the OLR and SST were not very dominant. Rather, the SST in the equatorial western Pacific exhibited a 20-30 day oscillation and fluctuated in phase with OLR during the northern summer of this year. Thus the air-sea coupling in the 30-60 day time scale seems to be weak during the northern summer of 1981. It is of interest that the periodicity in the intraseasonal oscillation tends to be short for the 1981 when the air-sea coupling appears to be weak.

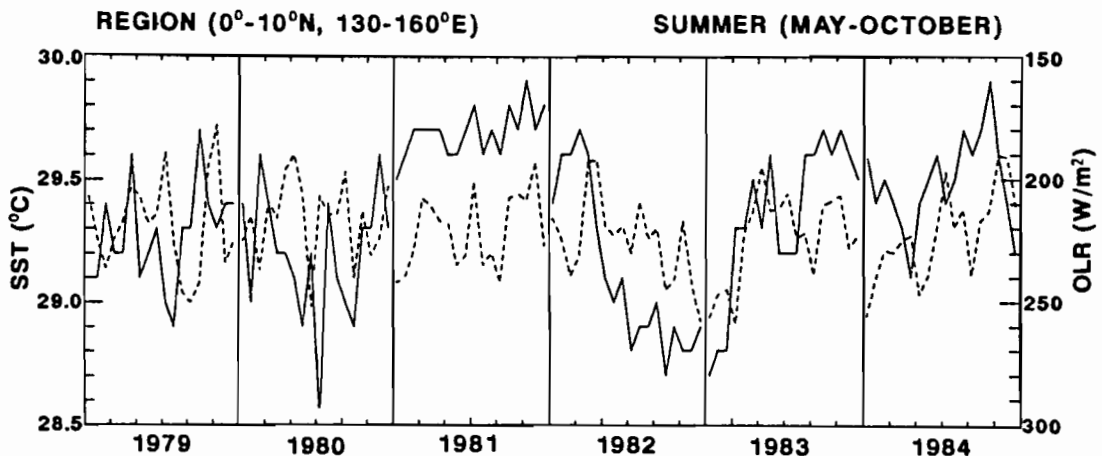


Fig. 3 Time series of the 10-day mean SST (solid line) and OLR (dashed line) in the key region (0° - 10° N, 130 - 160° E) during the northern summer (May-October) for the period from 1979 through 1984.

3. Phase relationships among SST, HCC and zonal wind at 850mb

Figure 4 shows time series of HCC, SST and 850mbu for two time scales in the key region during the 7 year period 1980-1986. We utilize the GMS high-cloud cover data defined as a fractional ratio of cloud pixels at a 1°latitude by 1°longitude area, whose top height is above 400mb. The maximum value of HCC is 10.0. Daily 850mbu data are derived from global analyses by ECMWF. The intraseasonal component is here evaluated as departures from the smoothed data (interannual component) using a 90-day weighted running mean. It is deduced that the amplitudes and phases of SST, HCC and 850mbu vary with longitude even over the tropical western Pacific, though both components have a general nature of propagating eastward. Hence time series of the three variables (SST, HCC and 850mbu) in two time scales in regions A and E are also indicated in Figs. 5 and 6, respectively. For the intraseasonal component in region A, the periods of large amplitude of all three variables are the 1979 period and 1984/85 period. The amplitude of the intraseasonal component in region E is smaller than that in region A. In contrast, the amplitude of the interannual component in region E tends to be larger than that in region A. Thus it is observed that the regions where two components are dominant are different each other.

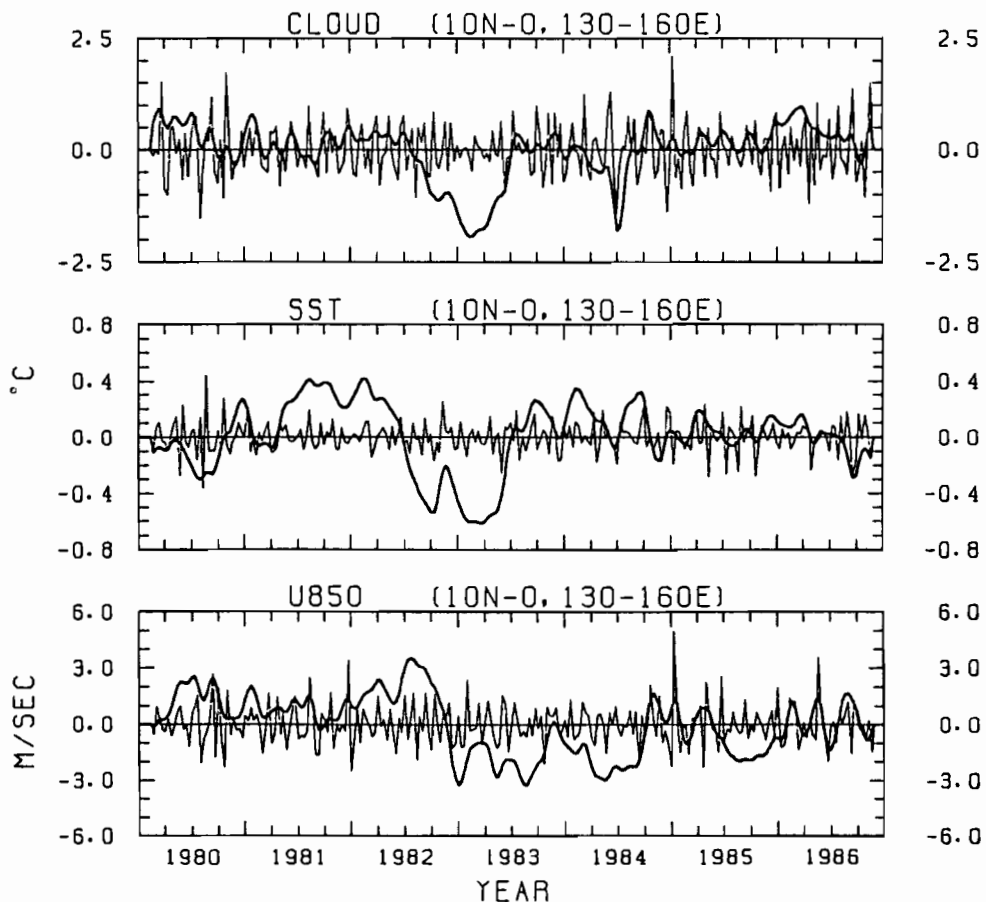


Fig. 4 Time series of HCC, SST and 850mbu in the key region for intraseasonal component (thin line) and interannual component (thick line).

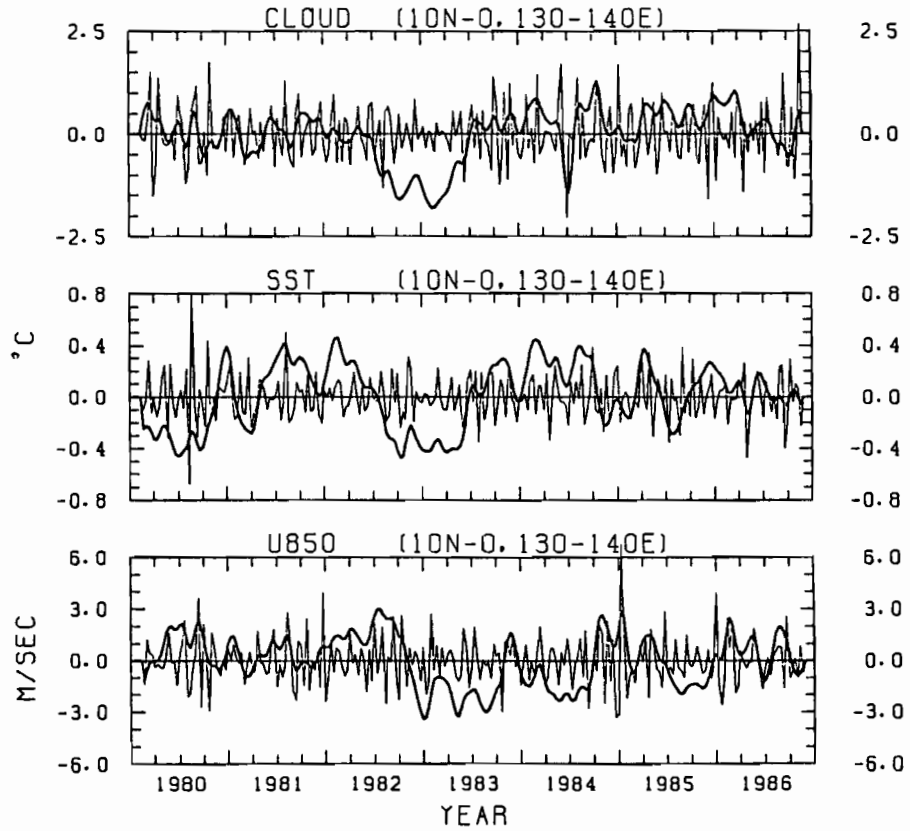


Fig. 5 As in Fig. 4, but for region A.

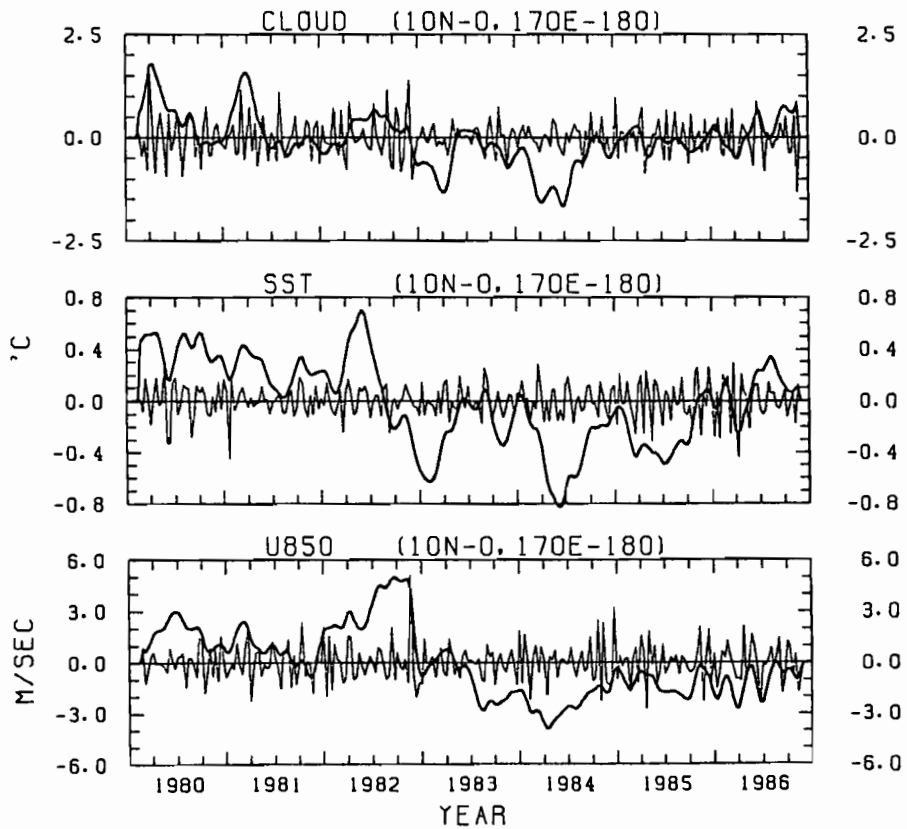


Fig. 6 As in Fig. 4, but for region E.

We next examined statistically phase relationships among three variables on each time scale in regions A, E and key region, using the CEOF analysis. Complex time series $X(j,t)$ is obtained by Hilbert transform of $x(j,t)$, the normalized time series of each variable j . $X(j,t)$ is expanded into the sum of EOFs as follows.

$$X(j,t) = \sum_{m=1}^3 F_{mt} B_m^*(j)$$

where the asterisk implies complex conjugation, $B_m(j)$ represents the complex eigenvector of the j -th variable for the m -th mode, and F_{mt} is the complex coefficient for $B_m(j)$. Considering only three variables, we solve the eigenvalue problem of the 3x3 complex correlation matrix (Hermitian matrix). We should refer to Barnett (1983) if more detailed explanation is needed. The amplitudes $A(j)$ and phases $P(j)$ of the first CEOF modes for the intraseasonal and interannual time scales in each region are shown in Fig. 7. We can obtain $A(j)$ and $P(j)$ as

$$A(j) = [B_m(j) B_m^*(j)]^{1/2},$$

$$P(j) = \tan^{-1} [\text{Im } B_m(j) / \text{Re } B_m(j)].$$

Here the first CEOF modes for the intraseasonal and interannual time scales are called the intraseasonal mode and interannual mode, respectively.

The intraseasonal mode has a similar tendency in all regions. In this mode the HCC is almost in phase with 850mb u , that is, the maximum of HCC is in accord with that of westerly wind at 850mb, while the SST leads HCC by around 140°-170°. If we notice the key region where the variance is largest in all regions, it can be seen that the amplitude of SST is somewhat smaller than that of HCC or 850mb u and phase difference between SST and HCC is about 140°. This means that in the intraseasonal time scale the HCC (or westerly wind at 850mb) couples with SST with a phase shift of 10-20 days. The above result is consistent with the results of previous observational studies (Kawamura, 1988; Murakami, 1988).

On the other hand, in the interannual mode the amplitude of SST is almost as large as that of HCC and the SST leads HCC by around 10°-30°. Further it is seen that the phase of 850mb u shifts obviously from regions A to E, that is, in region A the phase lag between SST and 850mb u is about 80°, whereas in region E the 850mb u comes to lag SST by only about 20°. Since the interannual mode includes the time scales of the ENSO and QBO, it is inferred that the SST over the western Pacific is anomalously high and then the HCC reaches its maximum about 1-3 months later. The maximum of westerlies at 850mb lags that of HCC by 3-7 months for the key region and by within 1 month for region E. The variance of the interannual mode tends to become large from the western Pacific eastward to the dateline. The above results are summarized as a schematic diagram as shown in Fig. 8.

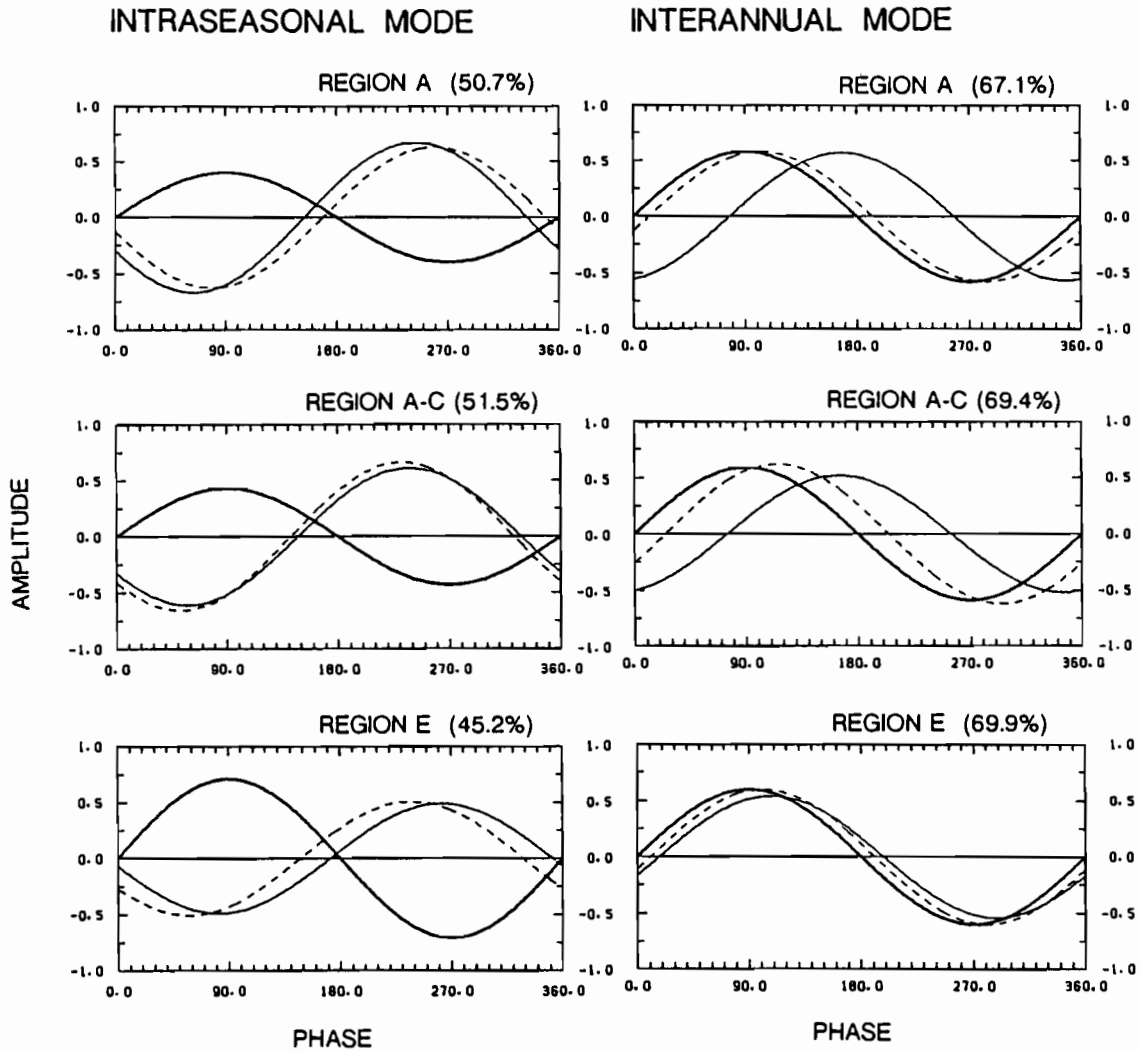


Fig. 7 The amplitudes and phases (degrees) of SST, HCC and zonal wind at 850mb on the intraseasonal and interannual modes. The SST, HCC and 850mbu are denoted by thick, dashed and thin lines, respectively. Note that the ratio of the explained variance of the total variance, expressed as percentages, is also shown for each region.

4. Summary and discussion

This paper addresses the question of air-sea coupling in the warm pool region of the western Pacific on intraseasonal and interannual time scales. We make investigation into phase relationships among SST, HCC and zonal wind at 850mb in two time scales using the CEOF analysis.

It is first found that there exist the remarkable differences of air-sea coupling in intraseasonal time scale from in interannual time scale. The intraseasonal mode reveals similar tendencies over the tropical western Pacific. In this mode the SST is approximately out of phase with HCC and

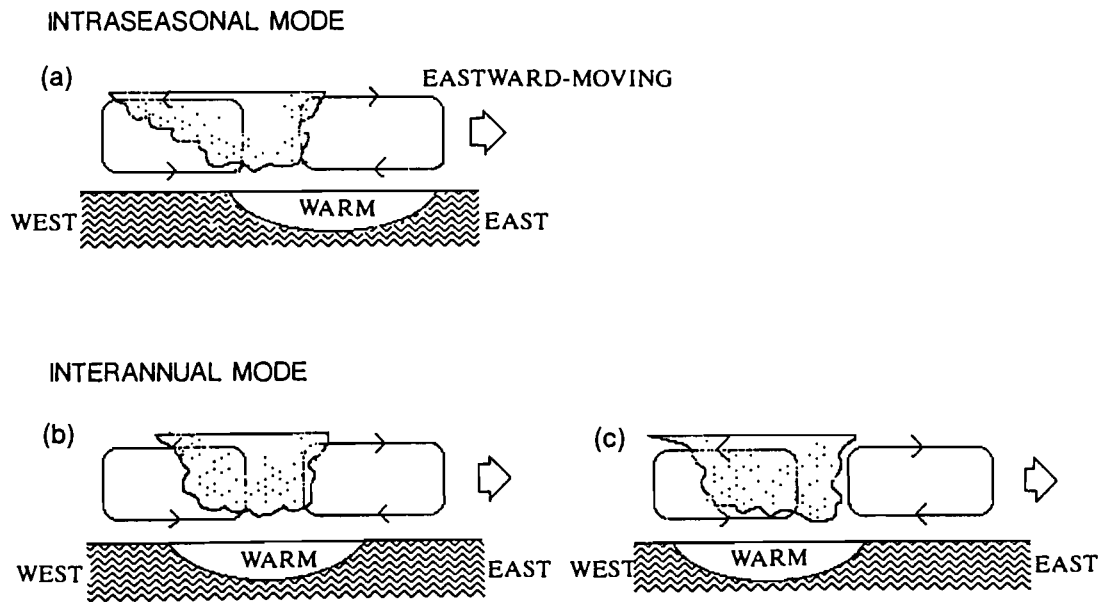


Fig. 8 Schematic diagrams displaying the phase relationship of air-sea coupling on (a) the intraseasonal mode for the key region and on the interannual mode for (b) the key region and (c) region E.

850mbu. The existence of high SST located to the east of eastward-propagating 30-60 day disturbance favors its further eastward propagation. This mode is very similar to the advective mode presented by Lau and Shen (1988) with respect to phase relationship. Their mode requires an east-west SST gradient. However, the intraseasonal mode defined in this paper exists in the warm pool region where the east-west SST gradient is so small. The intraseasonal variations of SST in the warm pool region, therefore, are probably caused by the mechanism of incoming short-wave radiation and turbulent mixing in ocean mixed layer rather than east-west SST advection. The importance of air-sea interaction for intraseasonal oscillations cannot be denied, though the amplitude of SST is somewhat smaller than of the other variables.

It is also found that the air-sea coupling in interannual time scale varies with longitude over the tropical western Pacific. The interannual mode is that the SST leads HCC by about 20° but the phase of 850mbu is different in each region. The SST-HCC negative feedback may not be essential to this mode because the SST and HCC tend to be in phase. Since the variances of this mode are large from the western Pacific eastward to the dateline, it is understood that an atmospheric interannual mode propagating eastward over the western Pacific gradually intensifies large-scale air-sea coupling. Although the variances of interannual mode are larger than those of intraseasonal mode, it may be natural that the air-sea coupling like the ENSO event is stronger than that in intraseasonal time scale.

Although we examined statistically phase relationships of air-sea couplings on two time scales only over the western Pacific, we will further understand the air-sea couplings of eastward-propagating modes in two time scales if a similar analysis is applied in the eastern Pacific and Indian Oceans.

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**WESTERN PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL MEETING
AND WORKSHOP ON TOGA COARE**

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PROCEEDINGS

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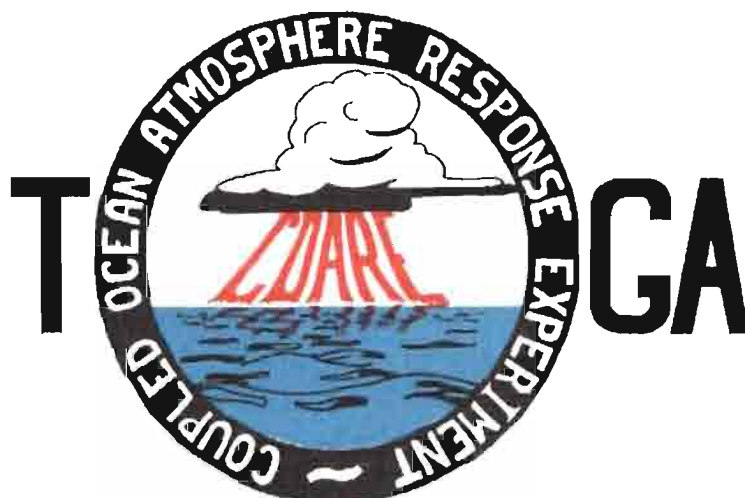


TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
RESUME	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
INTRODUCTION	
1. Motivation	1
2. Structure	2
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS	5
AGENDA	7
WORKSHOP REPORT	
1. Introduction	19
2. Working group discussions, recommendations, and plans	20
a. Air-Sea Fluxes and Boundary Layer Processes	20
b. Regional Scale Atmospheric Circulation and Waves	24
c. Regional Scale Oceanic Circulation and Waves	30
3. Related programs	35
a. NASA Ocean Processes and Satellite Missions	35
b. Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission	37
c. Typhoon Motion Program	39
d. World Ocean Circulation Experiment	39
4. Presentations on related technology	40
5. National reports	40
6. Meeting of the International Ad Hoc Committee on TOGA COARE	40
APPENDIX: WORKSHOP RELATED PAPERS	
Robert A. Weller and David S. Hosom: Improved Meteorological Measurements from Buoys and Ships for the World Ocean Circulation Experiment	45
Peter H. Hildebrand: Flux Measurement using Aircraft and Radars	57
Walter F. Dabberdt, Hale Cole, K. Gage, W. Ecklund and W.L. Smith: Determination of Boundary-Layer Fluxes with an Integrated Sounding System	81

MEETING COLLECTED PAPERS

WATER MASSES, SEA SURFACE TOPOGRAPHY, AND CIRCULATION

Klaus Wyrtki: Some Thoughts about the West Pacific Warm Pool	99
Jean René Donguy, Gary Meyers, and Eric Lindstrom: Comparison of the Results of two West Pacific Oceanographic Expeditions FOC (1971) and WEPOCS (1985-86)	111
Dunxin Hu, and Maochang Cui: The Western Boundary Current in the Far Western Pacific Ocean	123
Peter Hacker, Eric Firing, Roger Lukas, Philipp L. Richardson, and Curtis A. Collins: Observations of the Low-latitude Western Boundary Circulation in the Pacific during WEPOCS III	135
Stephen P. Murray, John Kindle, Dharma Arief, and Harley Hurlburt: Comparison of Observations and Numerical Model Results in the Indonesian Throughflow Region	145
Christian Henin: Thermohaline Structure Variability along 165°E in the Western Tropical Pacific Ocean (January 1984 - January 1989)	155
David J. Webb, and Brian A. King: Preliminary Results from Charles Darwin Cruise 34A in the Western Equatorial Pacific	165
Warren B. White, Nicholas Graham, and Chang-Kou Tai: Reflection of Annual Rossby Waves at The Maritime Western Boundary of the Tropical Pacific	173
William S. Kessler: Observations of Long Rossby Waves in the Northern Tropical Pacific	185
Eric Firing, and Jiang Songnian: Variable Currents in the Western Pacific Measured During the US/PRC Bilateral Air-Sea Interaction Program and WEPOCS	205
John S. Godfrey, and A. Weaver: Why are there Such Strong Steric Height Gradients off Western Australia ?	215
John M. Toole, R.C. Millard, Z. Wang, and S. Pu: Observations of the Pacific North Equatorial Current Bifurcation at the Philippine Coast	223

EL NINO/SOUTHERN OSCILLATION 1986-87

Gary Meyers, Rick Bailey, Eric Lindstrom, and Helen Phillips: Air/Sea Interaction in the Western Tropical Pacific Ocean during 1982/83 and 1986/87	229
Laury Miller, and Robert Cheney: GEOSAT Observations of Sea Level in the Tropical Pacific and Indian Oceans during the 1986-87 El Nino Event	247
Thierry Delcroix, Gérard Eldin, and Joël Picaut: GEOSAT Sea Level Anomalies in the Western Equatorial Pacific during the 1986-87 El Nino, Elucidated as Equatorial Kelvin and Rossby Waves	259
Gérard Eldin, and Thierry Delcroix: Vertical Thermal Structure Variability along 165°E during the 1986-87 ENSO Event	269
Michael J. McPhaden: On the Relationship between Winds and Upper Ocean Temperature Variability in the Western Equatorial Pacific	283

John S. Godfrey, K. Ridgway, Gary Meyers, and Rick Bailey: Sea Level and Thermal Response to the 1986-87 ENSO Event in the Far Western Pacific	291
Joël Picaut, Bruno Camusat, Thierry Delcroix, Michael J. McPhaden, and Antonio J. Busalacchi: Surface Equatorial Flow Anomalies in the Pacific Ocean during the 1986-87 ENSO using GEOSAT Altimeter Data	301

THEORETICAL AND MODELING STUDIES OF ENSO AND RELATED PROCESSES

Julian P. McCreary, Jr.: An Overview of Coupled Ocean-Atmosphere Models of El Nino and the Southern Oscillation	313
Kensuke Takeuchi: On Warm Rossby Waves and their Relations to ENSO Events	329
Yves du Penhoat, and Mark A. Cane: Effect of Low Latitude Western Boundary Gaps on the Reflection of Equatorial Motions	335
Harley Hurlburt, John Kindle, E. Joseph Metzger, and Alan Wallcraft: Results from a Global Ocean Model in the Western Tropical Pacific	343
John C. Kindle, Harley E. Hurlburt, and E. Joseph Metzger: On the Seasonal and Interannual Variability of the Pacific to Indian Ocean Throughflow	355
Antonio J. Busalacchi, Michael J. McPhaden, Joël Picaut, and Scott Springer: Uncertainties in Tropical Pacific Ocean Simulations: The Seasonal and Interannual Sea Level Response to Three Analyses of the Surface Wind Field	367
Stephen E. Zebiak: Intraseasonal Variability - A Critical Component of ENSO ?	379
Akimasa Sumi: Behavior of Convective Activity over the "Jovian-type" Aqua-Planet Experiments	389
Ka-Ming Lau: Dynamics of Multi-Scale Interactions Relevant to ENSO	397
Pecheng C. Chu and Roland W. Garwood, Jr.: Hydrological Effects on the Air-Ocean Coupled System	407
Sam F. Iacobellis, and Richard C.J. Somerville: A one Dimensional Coupled Air-Sea Model for Diagnostic Studies during TOGA-COARE	419
Allan J. Clarke: On the Reflection and Transmission of Low Frequency Energy at the Irregular Western Pacific Ocean Boundary - a Preliminary Report	423
Roland W. Garwood, Jr., Pecheng C. Chu, Peter Muller, and Niklas Schneider: Equatorial Entrainment Zone : the Diurnal Cycle	435
Peter R. Gent: A New Ocean GCM for Tropical Ocean and ENSO Studies	445
Wasito Hadi, and Nuraini: The Steady State Response of Indonesian Sea to a Steady Wind Field	451
Pedro Ripa: Instability Conditions and Energetics in the Equatorial Pacific	457
Lewis M. Rothstein: Mixed Layer Modelling in the Western Equatorial Pacific Ocean	465
Neville R. Smith: An Oceanic Subsurface Thermal Analysis Scheme with Objective Quality Control	475
Duane E. Stevens, Qi Hu, Graeme Stephens, and David Randall: The hydrological Cycle of the Intraseasonal Oscillation	485
Peter J. Webster, Hai-Ru Chang, and Chidong Zhang: Transmission Characteristics of the Dynamic Response to Episodic Forcing in the Warm Pool Regions of the Tropical Oceans	493

MOMENTUM, HEAT, AND MOISTURE FLUXES BETWEEN ATMOSPHERE AND OCEAN

W. Timothy Liu: An Overview of Bulk Parametrization and Remote Sensing of Latent Heat Flux in the Tropical Ocean	513
E. Frank Bradley, Peter A. Coppin, and John S. Godfrey: Measurements of Heat and Moisture Fluxes from the Western Tropical Pacific Ocean	523
Richard W. Reynolds, and Ants Leetmaa: Evaluation of NMC's Operational Surface Fluxes in the Tropical Pacific	535
Stanley P. Hayes, Michael J. McPhaden, John M. Wallace, and Joël Picaut: The Influence of Sea-Surface Temperature on Surface Wind in the Equatorial Pacific Ocean	543
T.D. Keenan, and Richard E. Carbone: A Preliminary Morphology of Precipitation Systems In Tropical Northern Australia	549
Phillip A. Arkin: Estimation of Large-Scale Oceanic Rainfall for TOGA	561
Catherine Gautier, and Robert Frouin: Surface Radiation Processes in the Tropical Pacific	571
Thierry Delcroix, and Christian Henin: Mechanisms of Subsurface Thermal Structure and Sea Surface Thermo-Haline Variabilities in the South Western Tropical Pacific during 1979-85 - A Preliminary Report	581
Greg. J. Holland, T.D. Keenan, and M.J. Manton: Observations from the Maritime Continent : Darwin, Australia	591
Roger Lukas: Observations of Air-Sea Interactions in the Western Pacific Warm Pool during WEPOCS	599
M. Nunez, and K. Michael: Satellite Derivation of Ocean-Atmosphere Heat Fluxes in a Tropical Environment	611

EMPIRICAL STUDIES OF ENSO AND SHORT-TERM CLIMATE VARIABILITY

Klaus M. Weickmann: Convection and Circulation Anomalies over the Oceanic Warm Pool during 1981-1982	623
Claire Perigaud: Instability Waves in the Tropical Pacific Observed with GEOSAT	637
Ryuichi Kawamura: Intraseasonal and Interannual Modes of Atmosphere-Ocean System Over the Tropical Western Pacific	649
David Gutzler, and Tamara M. Wood: Observed Structure of Convective Anomalies	659
Siri Jodha Khalsa: Remote Sensing of Atmospheric Thermodynamics in the Tropics	665
Bingrong Xu: Some Features of the Western Tropical Pacific: Surface Wind Field and its Influence on the Upper Ocean Thermal Structure	677
Bret A. Mullan: Influence of Southern Oscillation on New Zealand Weather	687
Kenneth S. Gage, Ben Basley, Warner Ecklund, D.A. Carter, and John R. McAfee: Wind Profiler Related Research in the Tropical Pacific	699
John Joseph Bates: Signature of a West Wind Convective Event in SSM/I Data	711
David S. Gutzler: Seasonal and Interannual Variability of the Madden-Julian Oscillation	723
Marie-Hélène Radenac: Fine Structure Variability in the Equatorial Western Pacific Ocean	735
George C. Reid, Kenneth S. Gage, and John R. McAfee: The Climatology of the Western Tropical Pacific: Analysis of the Radiosonde Data Base	741

Chung-Hsiung Sui, and Ka-Ming Lau: Multi-Scale Processes in the Equatorial Western Pacific	747
Stephen E. Zebiak: Diagnostic Studies of Pacific Surface Winds	757

MISCELLANEOUS

Rick J. Bailey, Helene E. Phillips, and Gary Meyers: Relevance to TOGA of Systematic XBT Errors	775
Jean Blanchot, Robert Le Borgne, Aubert Le Bouteiller, and Martine Rodier: ENSO Events and Consequences on Nutrient, Planktonic Biomass, and Production in the Western Tropical Pacific Ocean	785
Yves Dandonneau: Abnormal Bloom of Phytoplankton around 10°N in the Western Pacific during the 1982-83 ENSO	791
Cécile Dupouy: Sea Surface Chlorophyll Concentration in the South Western Tropical Pacific, as seen from NIMBUS Coastal Zone Color Scanner from 1979 to 1984 (New Caledonia and Vanuatu)	803
Michael Szabados, and Darren Wright: Field Evaluation of Real-Time XBT Systems	811
Pierre Rual: For a Better XBT Bathy-Message: Onboard Quality Control, plus a New Data Reduction Method	823