ON SUBGROUPINGS
OF THE POLYNESIAN LANGUAGES

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ポリネシア諸語の分類について

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INTRODUCTION

The Malayo-Polynesian or Austronesian family consists of those languages which are spoken in the areas of four geographically subgrouped islands in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean. They extend to Madagascar in the west, to Easter Island in the east, to Formosa in the north and to New Zealand in the south, including part of the Malay Peninsula on the continent of Asia, and excluding New Guinea except along the coast, Australia and Tasmania. The geographical groupings are Indonesia or Malaysia including the Philippines, Melanesia including New Guinea, Micronesia and Polynesia. Greenberg (1957, p. 49) refers to this family as a case in which "the relationship of the languages to one another as a whole was early recognized but even at present there is no satisfactory subgrouping."

This paper will give a rough sketch of the whole family and then examine what was done in subgrouping the Eastern Malayo-Polynesian and the Polynesian languages in some of the works published before and in the 1960s.

1. THE BRANCHES OF THE MALAYO-POLYNESIAN FAMILY

According to S. Ray, the relationship between languages of Indonesia and those farther east was first asserted in 1706. (Ray, 1926, p.19) This language family was first called "Malayo-Polynesian" by W. von Humboldt in 1836 when he discovered the relationship between Old Javanese (Kawi) and Polynesian languages; and "Austronesian" by W. Schmidt in 1899. (Reizenstein, 1959, p. 19) Although there has been an effort to establish its relationship with the Indo-European family by Bopp (Ibid.), the position as a separate family from the Indo-European seems to have been generally accepted among scholars.

Estimates of the number of languages and dialects of this family range from 263 (Gray, 1939, p. 418) to about 500 (Grace, 1955) depending on the method of deciding a language or dialect. It will remain impossible to give an exact number until further research has obtained a reliable description of every dialect and made a

decision as to its status. The extent of the geographical areas and inaccessibility of some parts of the areas have been a problem in the research, and the lack of descriptive material on these numerous languages and dialects has been a big obstacle in establishing subclassification within the family.

The reconstruction of Proto-Malayo-Polynesian was done by Dempwolff by 1938 followed by some modifications or corrections by the linguists after him. In 1950s the method of lexicostatistics cast a new light in this field and some works have been done since although not every scholar accepts this method.

The classification of the Malayo-Polynesian family which appears in the handbooks before 1950s by Meillet-Cohen (1924), Bloomfield (1933) and Gray (1933) present the following four subgroups implying that this classification is used for convenience in the absence of a truly linguistic one: Indonesian, Melanesian, Micronesian and Polynesian. In his *A Comparative Study of the Melanesian Languages,* Sidney Ray expresses his view of the Melanesian languages as a pidginized form of the Indonesian languages. He says that "the Indonesian in Melanesian is a foreign element, introduced by colonists from the west," which eventually modified and introduced a certain amount of similarity into originally different dialects.(Ray, 1926, p.597)

W. Schmidt, in his *Die Sprachfamilien und Sprachenkreise der Erde* (1926), classifies as follows: (1) Indonesian (2) Oceanic (further subgrouped into (a) Polynesian, (b) Ubergango-Sprachen (South coast of Territory of Papua, Central New Hebrides, and Central Solomon) and (c) Melanesia (the remaining Austronesian languages of Melanesia and Micronesia). This dichotomy into Indonesian and Oceanic is to appear as the two main Western and Eastern subbranches in Grace's classification in 1955.

Otto Dempwolff worked on reconstruction of Proto-Malayo-Polynesian sound system and large Proto-Malayo-Polynesian vocabulary. In these works published between 1934 and 1938, he notes that (1) the phonological agreement between Polynesian and Melanesian is such as to indicate a special relationship, and (2) the relationship of these to the Indonesian languages is the result of their common origin, not of recent influence. The test languages used for reconstruction are Malay, Javanese, Toba-Batak (in Sumatra), Ngadju-Dayak (in Borneo), Tagalog (in the Phillipines), Hova or Merina (in Madagascar). The criterion languages chosen from Melanesia and Polynesia are Fijian, Sa'a, Futuna, Tongan and Samoan.(Ibid.) These works are generally regarded as those which laid a foundation for the study of this family.

Les Langues du monde (1952) presents a new classification quite different from the preceding works, suggesting that the Malayo-Polynesian consists of two independent, though possibly related, families and assigns two separate chapters, namely one for Indonesian and Polynesian, and another for Melanesian and Micronesian. Maurice Leenhardt who wrote the chapter on Melanesian thought them to be a separate family only influenced by the Indonesian languages although he says that "l'hypothese d'une parente genetique n'est pas exclue." (Meillet-Cohen, 1952, p. 647) Greenberg's review of this book seems to represent dissatisfaction with this new classification. He says:

There is not the slightest linguistic justification for this division. Even the most cautious should admit the relation of Melanesian languages to the general Malayo–Polynesian family when we consider that two of the languages of Melanesia, Ulawa and Sa'a, are utilized by Dempwolff in reconstructing Proto–Malayo–Polynesian. Moreover, Polynesian is far more closely related to Melanesian and Eastern Micronesian languages than to those of Indonesia. (Greenberg, 1954, pp.1133–4)

Grace and his associate members, who engaged in genetic classification of the Malayo–Polynesian languages, especially those of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia, reported the tentative subgroupings in 1955. Grace proposed a large subgrouping called Eastern Austronesian as opposed to Western Austronesian. While this classification has been accepted by some, it has caused an objection by others. I. Dyen is strongly against this subgrouping, Eastern Austronesian, saying that:

The evidence of our classification indicates that what has been called Western Malayo–Polynesian—to the extent that it is not identical with Hesperonesian—is probably one or more subgroups out of a large number of groups of equivalent rank belonging to the Malayo–Polynesian family. Eastern Malayo–Polynesian appears not to be a group at all, but simply a collection of poorly studied groups belonging to this family. (Dyen, 1962, p. 46)

But at the same time Dyen notes that the results showed some groups as distinct. They are Polynesian, Caroline, to which Turkese and Ponapean belong, New Georgian in the New Georgian Archipelago of Melanesia, Choiseul on the island of the same name in Melanesia, Hollandia and Sarmic of New Guinea and others. (Ibid. p.42)

2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EASTERN MALAYO–POLYNESIAN SUBGROUPING

By comparing over 400 vocabulary items and grammatical features Grace classifies the Eastern Malayo–Polynesian into nineteen smaller groups which include about 250 languages and dialects. (Grace 1955, pp.338–339) The groupings are listed in terms of the geographical areas: 1. New Caledonia, 2. Nengone (Loyalty Is.), 3. Lifu (Loyalty Is.), 4. Iai (Loyalty Is.), 5. New Hebrides–Banks: 5a. Southern New Hebrides (Aneityum, Tanna, Eromanga), 5b. A grouping consisting of the following subgroupings: 5b1 The remainder of the New Hebrides (from Efate north) except Pentecost, Aurora, and Leper's Islands, 5b2 Rotuma, 5b3 Fiji, 5b4 Polynesian (All Polynesian languages including the Outliers), 5c. Pentecost, Aurora, and Leper's Islands, Bank's Island, Terres Island, 5d. (?) Micronesian (All the languages of Micronesia except Palauan and Chamorro, the memberhsip of this grouping in the New Hebrides–Banks subgrouping is highly probable, but not certain), 6 (?) Santa Crutz Is. (only a probable grouping), 7. Southeastern Solomons (extending at least as far as the center of the island of Ysabel), 8. New Georgis Archipelago, 9. Choiseul, 10. Bougainville Straits, Bougainville, and Buka, 11. New Ireland, New Hanover,

Duke of York, and the northern half of New Britain, 12. Southwest New Britain, Kobe, French Is., Siassi Is., and Kelana, Tami, Yabim, Bukaus, and Suam of the adjacent coast of New Guinea, 13. Astriolabe Bay Area, 14. The island of Manam and the Southern Is. occupy an area between groups 13 and 15 (at least some of the langauges appear to be Malayo-Polynesian, but the information is insufficient), 15. Admiralty Is. and the Western Is. (Ninig, etc.) except Wuvulu and Aua, 16. Central District of Papua, and 19. A grouping in the Milne Bay and Northern Districts of Papua consisting of a. The Island of Mugura (off the south coast of the mainland) to Misima Is., b. Tagula I., c. Laughlan Is., Woodlark I., Kiriwina I., d. Dobu, d. The north coast of the mainland of New Guinea form Milne Bay to Collingwood Bay.

In his article in 1961, Grace asserts the existence of the Eastern Malayo-Polynesian subgrouping on the evidences of the phonological innovations as follows:

1. All word-final consonants have been lost.

2. A number of unifications of Proto-Austronesian consonant phonemes had occurred in the proto-language of the Eastern Austronesian group. In all, fifteen Proto-Austronesian consonants were involved, while the number of Proto-Eastern phonemes resulting from those fifteen was only six.

3. All diphthongs of Proto-Austronesian become unit vowel phonemes in Proto-Eastern. In addition, a number of Proto-Austronesian consonant clusters become unit phonemes in many Eastern languages.(p.363)

Grace's article in 1959 deals with a larger subgrouping of Fijian, Rotuman and Polynesian languages among the Eastern Malayo-Polynesian languages. These three groups appear as constituting one of the divisions in New Hebrides-Banks (Grouping 5 among the nineteen mentioned above) in 1955. This conclusion is based on phonology, grammar and vocabulary. The features which distinguish these languages from the others are as follows:

1. The particle, *ko*, the pronominal suffix, *-tou*, and the pronominal prefixes Fi. *ke-* and PN *ki-*, probably all represent innovation shared by Fijian and Polynesian.

2. The pronominal suffix, *u-*, the employment of the possessive classifiers, and the plural articles, Rot. *ne, ni* probably represent innovation shared by Rotuman and Polynesian.(Grace, 1959, p.55)

3. The common loss of Proto-Austronesian *R*.

4. The comparable employment of nasal accretion to Proto-Austronesian *p, b* by Fijian, the Polynesian languages and Rotuman.(Ibid. p.38)

3 . THE POLYNESIAN SUBGROUPING

There seems to be no room for argument as to the homogeneity of the Polynesian group and this has been noted by many linguists for a long time. The number of the names of languages and dialects which are listed in Hollyman's checklist is fifty-one including practically extinct Moriori of Chatham Is., New Zealand. (See Appendix)

Samuel Elbert attempted to establish internal relationship of the languages of this subgrouping using twenty languages whose descriptions were available. The method

employed here was that of glottochronology. He extends Swadesh's "basic" vocabulary items into 202 words adding some words pertinent to the culture of this area. By counting the percentage of shared cognates between each set of these twenty languages, Elbert establishes the degree of closeness referring to the period of separation. Twenty languages are divided into three groups: (1) West: Futunan, Uvean, Niue, Tongan, Tikopian, Ellice Islands, Samoan; (2) East: Easter Island, Mangarevan, Marquesan, Rorotongan, Tuamotuan, Maori of New Zealand, Hawaiian, Tahitian and (3) Outliers: Sikiana, Fila, Ontong Java, Nukuoro, Kapingamarangi.

Elbert gives the phonemic correspondences of these languages, with Proto-Polynesian phonemes as follows (Elbert, 1953, p.154 Table 1)[1]:

	p	t	k	?	f	v	s	h	m	n	ŋ	l	r	i	e	æ	a	O	o	u
PPN	p	t	k	?	f	v	s	h	m	n	ŋ	l	r	i	e	æ	a	O	o	u
Fu	p	t	k	?/#	f	v	s	#	m	n	ŋ	l	r	i	e	a/e	a	a	o	u
U	p	t	k	?/#	f	v	h	h/#	m	n	ŋ	l	l/#	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u
Ni	p	t	k	#	f	v	h	h	m	n	ŋ	l	#	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u
To	p	t	k	?/#	f	v	h	h	m	n	ŋ	l	#	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u
Ti	p	t	k	#	f	v	s	#	m	n	ŋ	r/l	r/l	i	e	a	a	a	o	u
E	p	t	k	#	f	v	s	#	m	n	ŋ	l	l	i	e	a	a	a	o	u
Sa	p	t	k	#	f	v	s	#/s	m	n	ŋ	l	l	i	e	a	a	a	o	u
Si[2]	p	t	k	#	h	v	s/h	#	m	n	n	l	l	i	e	a	a	a/o	o	u
Fi[2]	p	t	k	#	f	v	s	s/#	m	n	ŋ	r	r	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u
Oj[2]	p	t	?	#	h	v	s/h	#	m	n	ŋ	. l	l	i	e	a	a	a/o	o	u
Nu[2]	p	t	k	#	f/h	v	s/h	h/s/#	m	n	ŋ	r	r	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u
K	p/ph	t/th	k/kh	#	h	w/wh	h	#	m/mh	n/nh	ŋ/ŋh	r/rh	r	i	e	a	a	a/o	o	u
EI	p	t	k	?[3]	h	v	h	#	m	n	ŋ	r	r	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u
Mr	p	t	k	#	?[3]	v	?[3]	#	m	n	ŋ	r	r	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u
Ma	p	t	k/?	#	f/h	v	h	#	m	n/ŋ/k	ŋ	?	?	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u
Rt	p	t	k	#	?/#	b	?/#	#	m	n	ŋ	r	r	i	e	a/e	a	a	o	u
Tu	p	t	k	#	f/h	v	h	#	m	n	ŋ	r	r	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u
NZ	p	t	k	#	h/wh	w	h	#	m	n	ŋ	r	r	i	e	a/e	a	a	o	u
H	p	k	?	#	h	w	h	#	m	n	ŋ	l	l	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u
Ta	p	t	?	#	f/h	v	h	#	m	?	ŋ	r	r	i	e	a/e	a	a/o	o	u

1. No phonemic length is shown. In EI double vowels were interpreted as single long vowels. # = zero

2. Phoneme correspondences based on limited data, tentative.

3. Elbert's original table indicates # or h/#, but these were pointed out as mistakes by Jack H. Ward in his field study.(Personal communication)

Further, Elbert notes that (1) consonant clusters do not occur, and with minor exceptions, all words end with vowels; and (2) 50% of reconstructed words have a shape CVCV, 14% have CVCVCV, 9% have VCV and CVVCV.(Elbert, 1953, p.155)

The results of his computation are as follows:

1. The highest percentages of agreement are West to West and East and East, 86 to 71.

2. West to East percentages are considerably lower, 71 to 45.

He concludes that East and West had become distinguished before the differences developed among languages in either area. (Ibid. p. 158)

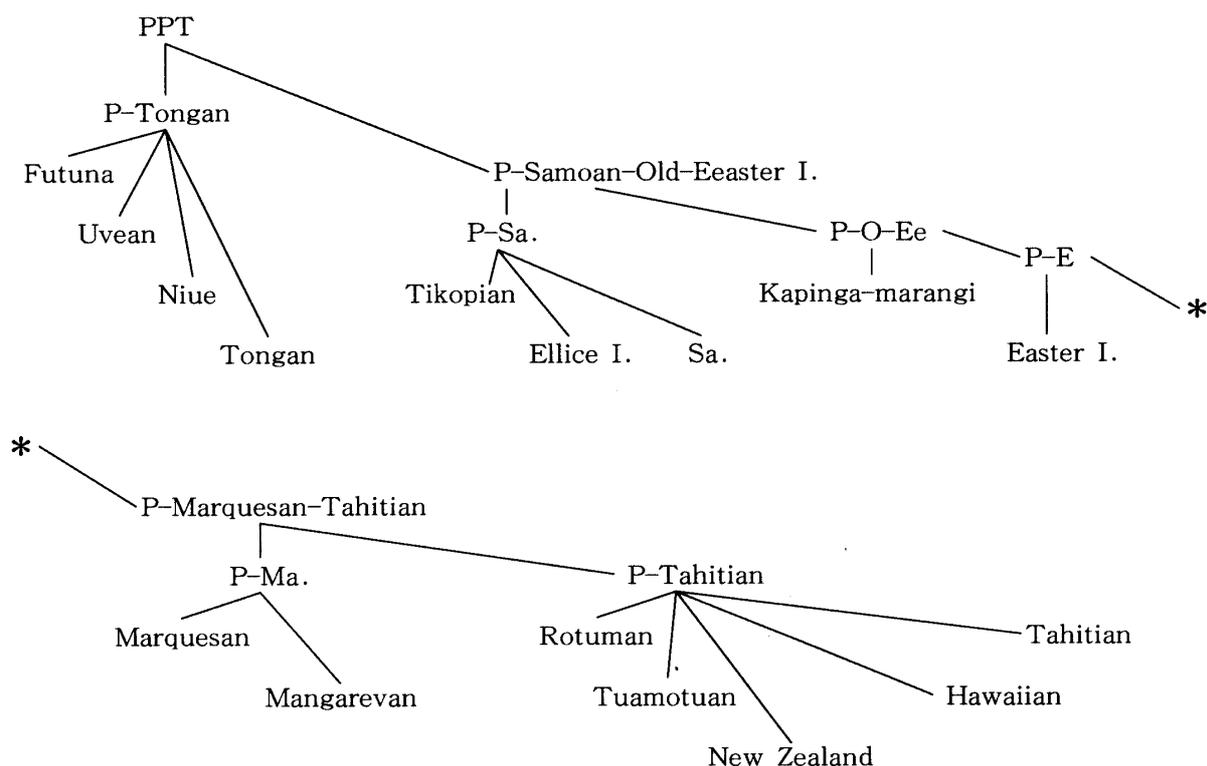The morphological features noted as widespread among the Polynesian languages are the following seven:

1. Two principal classes of words that may be termed full words and particles. Full words may be subdivided on the basis of contiguous particles and position, with the subdivisions labelled by such terms as noun, verb and adjective.

2. Particles indicative of such categories as tense–aspect, mood, and case; some particles precede the base, others follow, and a few are discontinuous. The traditional "causative" *faka, for example, has been noted everywhere except in Fila, where data are lacking. A particle usually termed "definite article" has been found in every language, as well as particles marking numerals.

3. Reduplication, partial and complete, with various meanings, including frequentative or repetitive action.

4. Directional particles following a base. (*mai "direction towards the speaker" was noted in every language.)

5. Demonstratives, usually indicating position near the speaker, near the addressee, and away from either.

6. Personal pronouns with distinctions of singular, dual and plural numbers, and inclusiveness and exclusiveness of the dual and plural first persons.

7. Possessive dichotomy of forms with o- forms and a forms.(Ibid. pp.162–163)

The following four features are shared only by West and Outliers areas:

1. "Short" pronouns as well as "long" pronouns: in Fu. U., To., Ti., E., Sa., Fi.

2. Pronouns containing *ki: in To., E. (rare), Sa., Si., Nu., K.

3. Possessives containing as *-s morpheme: in Fu., U., To., E., Sa.

4. "Reciprocal" particle *fe-: in Fu., U., To., Ti., E., Sa. (Ibid. p. 163)

From the morphological simplicity appeared in the Outliers, and absence of these features in the Eastern group, Elbert suggests that the Outliers relate more closely to the East than to the West.

By the percentages of vocabulary retention, Elbert shows the time of separation of these languages and presents the following supposed family tree of these Polynesian.

PPT

P-Tongan

Futuna

Uvean   P-Samoan-Old-Eeaster I.

Niue   P-Sa.   P-O-Ee   P-E

Tongan   Tikopian   Kapinga-marangi

Ellice I.   Sa.   Easter I.   *

*

P-Marquesan-Tahitian

P-Ma.   P-Tahitian

Marquesan   Rotuman   Tahitian

Mangarevan   Tuamotuan   Hawaiian

New Zealand

SUMMARY

Dyen suggests that the time of separation of this family predates that of Proto-Indo European, that is before 2500 B.C. (Dyen, 1962, p.46) This calculation is based on glottochronology. But dating and classification of unwritten languages present a difficult question in any case. Glottochronology cannot be used as a sole evidence for subgrouping, since, as Greenberg (1957, p.54) duly points out, "the mere counting of the number of cognate shared, without attention to morphological or phonologic evidence and without consideration of the general distribution of each form for its bearing on the question of innovation, is a relatively crude method which disregards much relevant evidence."

Dempwolff's method is primarily comparative. Dyen's comparative method modified Dempwolff's Malayo-Polynesian phonemic inventory. (cf. Dyen,1953) Elbert's work deals primarily with glottochronology in the Polynesian languages, but he also utilizes typological criteria, in making his East-West distinction as well as in giving general characteristics of the Polynesian languages. Grace's works are comparative and also lexicostatistical.

Various methods of linguistic studies employed in the 1950s and 1960s have made it possible for us to understand some of the relatiohship between the widely scattered languages within this family.

APPENDIX

The names of the languages and dialects listed as the Polynesian languages in Hollyman (1960) * are the followings:

Aniwa   Aniwa I, NH

Anuta   Cherry I, Sa Cruz Arch, BSIP

Atui (Hawaiian) Hawaii Is

Emae 1. =Mae

Fakaofa (Tokelau) Bowditch I, Union Is

Funafuti   Ellice I, Ellice Gp

Futuna 1.   Eastern Futuna (Horne) I

Futuna 2.   Western Futuna (Erronan) I, S NH

Hawaiian   Hawaii Is

Kapingamarangi   Greenwich Is

Kilinailan   BSIP

Leuangiau   Ontong Java BSIP

Mae   Three Hills I, Central NH

Mangaian   Mangais S Cook Is

Manihiki-Rakahangan   S Cook Is

Maori   NZ

Marquesan   Marquesas Is

Mayorga (Tongan) NE Tonga Is

Mele   Efate I, NH

Mo-iki   Bellona I, BSIP

Moriori   Chatham Is, NZ

Napuka (Tuamatuan)   Low Arch

Niue   Niue I

Nuguria   Abgarris (Fead) I, E New TNG (Is) Ireland

Nukuhiva (Marquesan)   Marquese Is

Nukumanu   Tasman Is, TNG (Is)

Nukuoro   Monteverde I, Micronesia

Pileni   Reef Is, Sta Cruz Arch, BSIP

Pukapukan   Danger Is, N Cook Is

Rapa   Austral Is

Rarotongan   Cook Is

Rennellese   Rennell I, BSIP

Rimatara (Rapa)   Austral Is

Samoan   Samoa Is

Sikaiana   Stewawt Is, BSIP

Tahitian   Society Is

Tahuata (Marquesan)   S Marquesas Is

Taipi (Nukuhiva)   S Nukuhiva I, Marquesas Is

Ta'u–Tauu–Mortlock 2 Mortlock Gp, TNG (Is)

Teu (Nukuhiva) N Nukuhiva I, Marquesas Is

Tikopia Tikopia I, Sta Cruz Arch, BSIP

Tokelau Union Is

Tongan Tongan Is

Tongarevan Penrhyn I, Cook Is

Tuamotuan Low Arch

Tubuai Austral Is

Uvea 1. Eastern Uvea (Wallise) Is

Uvea 2. Western Uvea (Halgan) Is, Loyalty Is

Vaitupu Tracy I, Ellice Is

Abbreviation:

BSIP=British Solomon Islands Protectorate; NH=New Hebrides;

TNG(M)=Territory of New Guinea, Mainland; NC=New Caledinia;

NNG=Netherlands New Guinea; I=Island; Is=Islands; Dis=District; Div=Division;

St=Saint,San; Sta=Sainte, Santa; Gp=Group; M=Mainland; E=East; W=West;

S=South; N=North

Ex. Atui (Hawaiian) Hawaii Is =Atui is a dialect of Hawaiian spoken on Hawaii Islands

＊The original list contains those languages and dialects which appeared in the following reference books:

Cappell, A.: *A Survey of the Linguistic Research Position and Requirements for the Area, with special reference to the production of standard orthographies, grammars, and textbooks, 1950*

Codrington, R.: *The Melanesian Languages, Oxford, 1885*

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Reizenstein, M. E.: "The comparative linguistics of Oceanic languages: A review of work
      done" in *TE REO*, 2:6–14, 1959

_____: "Problems of Reconstruction in the Austronesian Languages" in *TE REO*
      3:32–43, 1960