WORD TABOO AND COMPARATIVE AUSTRONESIAN LINGUISTICS

Gary F. Simons

0. INTRODUCTION

It is a common practice among Austronesian languages that certain words become tabooed because of their association with things sacred or things proscribed. This fact has long been known, but its implications for comparative linguistics have not yet been sufficiently recognised. Early in this century, Sir James Frazer in his classic work on primitive religion, *The golden bough,* devotes 100 pages to the topic of tabooed words, with the majority of his examples coming from Austronesian languages[1] (1911:318-418). The potential effect on language history could be significant, since when a word becomes taboo its users must change the way it is pronounced or replace it altogether.[2] However, word tabooing has received little attention by comparative Austronesian linguists. A notable exception is Dyen's observation (Dyen 1963) that word tabooing may account for unexpectedly low cognate percentages in his lexicostatistical classification of the Austronesian languages.

The most thorough treatment of word tabooing in a particular Austronesian language is Keesing and Fifi'i 1969. The authors describe in full both the cultural forces which motivate and maintain the taboos, and the linguistic mechanisms which carry them out. They go beyond the description of Kwaio word tabooing to make two observations of a more general nature: (1) word tabooing seems to have been widespread enough in the Pacific that perhaps the early Oceanic speakers practised some form of it (1969:154-155), and (2) a long history of word tabooing could explain some problems in comparative Oceanic linguistics (1969:155).

In this paper I am following up the lead given by Keesing and Fifi'i, and have compiled evidence which supports these two hypotheses, not only for Oceanic but for Austronesian as a whole. The paper develops in three parts. In part 1, from two groups of word tabooing languages in the Solomon Islands, I give evidence for just how word taboo can affect language change and comparative linguistics. In part 2, with a sample of data from 75 Austronesian languages, I plot the distribution of various types of word tabooing practices and then reconstruct some of these for certain proto-speech communities. In part 3, given the ways in which word taboo is known to affect language change and given the reconstruction of word tabooing for early Austronesian speech communities, I suggest a number of problems in comparative Austronesian linguistics for which word taboo may hold at least a partial explanation.

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1. THE EFFECT OF WORD TABOO IN COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS

In this section I attempt to show not only in what ways word taboo can affect language change, but also to give quantitative estimates of the extent to which it actually does in documented cases. The first two subsections report on results of my own field work in the Solomon Islands, first on Santa Cruz and then on Malaita.[3] The third subsection reports information that was gleaned from other authors. In defining the scope of comparative linguistics, I include quantitative methods like lexicostatistics as well as the qualitative methods for comparative reconstruction.

1.1 The case of Santa Cruz, Solomon Islands

My first personal experience with word taboo and comparative linguistics came in a dialect survey of Santa Cruz Island conducted with Richard Buchan in 1977 (Simons 1977a, 1979). We found 15 dialects which group into two languages on a criterion of mutual intelligibility. A Swadesh wordlist was collected by Buchan from each of the dialects. After preliminary comparisons of all the lists, words that required double checking were identified. In one case, when Buchan went back and asked the word again, he got a completely different response. When he queried the discrepancy, the bystanders explained, "Oh, he can't say that word", and the story of word taboo on Santa Cruz unfolded.

Word taboo in Santa Cruz is based on a taboo against calling the name of certain of one's affinal relations. In the Graciosa Bay dialect the kinship relation involved is called the *kado*.[4] It is a reciprocal kinship term designating the relationship between son-in-law and mother-in-law, son-in-law and father-in-law, and husbands of sisters (that is, men who have the same parents-in-law). Between males who are *kado* there is a relationship of marked restraint evidenced by a taboo on joking and on saying the name of the *kado*. Between a son- and mother-in-law the relationship is one of stringent avoidance with an additional taboo on even making eye contact with each other.[5] When one's *kado* dies, the name taboo still remains in effect.[6] If a person breaks the name taboo, he must pay compensation to everyone who heard him say the name (except never to the offended *kado*). In pre-European times, a person would buy some food with the traditional currency, red-feather money (Davenport 1962), and make presentations of it. Today, they buy tobacco with government currency.

Names in Santa Cruz consist of a common word preceded by one of two prefixes for marking the sex of the referent. Men's names begin with me- and women's names begin with i-. Thus from the word kio *bird* two names can be formed: Mekio for a man and Ikio for a woman. Occasionally a man's name will omit the me- prefix. Some names have a compound root, as in Menäkanyä (me-näka-nyä *male-smoke-fire*) *Mr Smoke of fire*.

The taboo does not end with the name. It also extends to the common words which form the tabooed name. If, for instance, a man's mother-in-law is named Ikio, he cannot use the common word kio to refer to birds. He must find another way to talk about birds. Common methods of finding a replacement form include borrowing the word from a neighbouring dialect, inventing a circumlocution, or modifying the word phonologically.

To find out the potential effect of this word tabooing custom on language change and comparative linguistics, I went through the survey wordlist (basically the Swadesh 100-word list) with a middle-aged man asking him if anyone had a name with that meaning. His responses included names of people from all over the island, not just his own dialect. However, I am sure that similar questioning in other dialect areas would uncover many more examples of basic vocabulary in names.
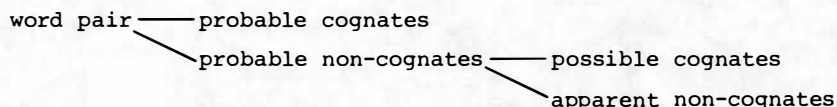
The result was that by the knowledge of one middle-aged man, 46% of the basic vocabulary items occur in names. This means that 46% of the basic vocabulary is potentially taboo for some people on the island to use, and potentially liable to spontaneous change. One-third of the names he cited were based on words from a dialect different from his own. The fact that he knew their meanings suggests that dialect forms are widely known and probably commonly used as synonyms when replacing tabooed forms.

The Santa Cruz dialects offer three problems of a phonological nature for comparative linguistics: the difficulty of establishing regular sound correspondences among the dialects, the difficulty of determining if forms are cognate, and the difficulty of establishing the regular sound changes for identifiable Austronesian roots. Without prehistoric written records it may not ever be possible to prove that a process of changing tabooed words by phonological modification lies at the root of these problems. However, I suggest that in the given cultural setting it offers a very plausible explanation for problems that are otherwise difficult to explain. Each of these problems is now considered in turn.

(1) The difficulty of establishing regular sound correspondences among the Santa Cruz dialects: No one has yet attempted this in print; however, when the attempt is made there will be many exceptions to the proposed sound laws. In Buchan's dialect survey wordlists (Simons 1977a:30-40), I found that 55% of the 125 proposed sets of cognate words appear to contain irregular sound correspondences. Although some of these cases are no doubt due to transcription errors and errors in judgment, a very large residue of irregular sound correspondences must remain.

(2) The difficulty of determining if forms are cognate: The irregularity of sound change leads to a problem for lexicostatistics — we cannot always be sure if two forms are cognate. The cognate percentages recorded in the dialect survey report (Simons 1977a:18) are percentages of 'probable' cognates. With 55% of the cognate sets showing what appear to be irregular sound correspondences, even these cognate judgments are questionable in places. However, we can go still further. For instance, in the word for 'mouth' there are two basic cognate sets, nao forms and nabwa forms. There are no recurring sound correspondences which account for the loss of b and the change of wa to o; thus, these forms were scored as noncognate in the computation of probable cognates. However, given the fact that tabooed words can be replaced by phonological modification, it is very possible that these words derive from the same original word. Other examples of forms not counted probably cognate, but which are possibly cognate, are: nɔvo and newa *meat*, mwa and mna *eye*, nainyo and ino and ne *leg*,[7] and many more.

For any comparison of two dialects, a pair of words can be categorised in the following way:

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word pair ───── probable cognates

          ╲──── probable non-cognates ───── possible cognates

                                        ╲──── apparent non-cognates
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That is, a pair of words can be probable cognates or probable non-cognates. The probable non-cognates can be further classified as possible cognates (given the phonological modification mechanisms of word taboo) or apparent non-cognates.

For each pair of dialects, the percentage of probable non-cognates that are possible cognates was computed. The results for all 105 pair-wise dialect comparisons among the 15 dialects are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Possible cognates in Santa Cruz dialects				
Range of % probable cognates	Number of cases	Average % probable non-cognates	Average % possible cognates	% of probable non-cognates that are possible cognates
90-99%	22	5.7%	1.2%	21%
80-89%	27	15.0%	4.1%	27%
70-79%	30	26.1%	9.0%	34%
60-69%	15	34.9%	12.2%	35%
50-59%	11	45.8%	18.4%	40%

The first row of the table reads as follows: 22 pairs of dialects have from 90% to 99% probable cognates; for these 22, the average percentage of probable non-cognates is 5.7%, of which 1.2% are possible cognates. Thus the proportion of probable non-cognates that are possible cognates is 1.2/5.7, or 21%.

The fact that from 21% to 40% of the forms originally judged to be non-cognate are so similar in form as to be possibly cognate proves that indeed most of them must be originally cognate. The laws of probability tell us that it is virtually impossible that as many as 40% of the non-cognate forms could be that similar in form merely by chance. A process of spontaneous and irregular phonological modification, such as is needed for maintaining word taboos, has indeed been at work among the Santa Cruz dialects.[8]

The fact that the percentage of probable non-cognates that are possibly cognate increases steadily from 21% to 40% as the lexicostatistic similarity decreases from 99% to 50%, accords with how we would expect a word taboo motivated process of phonological modification to work. As the irregular changes occur spontaneously in local areas and then spread, eventually we would expect changes to occur on top of changes. Therefore, the further apart the dialects, the greater the potential number of overlain changes and thus the greater appearance of non-cognation.

(3) The difficulty of establishing regular sound changes for identifiable Austronesian roots: As early as 1926, Sidney Ray identified a number of Austronesian forms in these languages but remarked that "a careful examination of the vocabularies gives few examples of regular phonetic changes" (1926:451). Fifty years later, Wurm's attempts along these same lines have met with the same result (1970b, 1976).
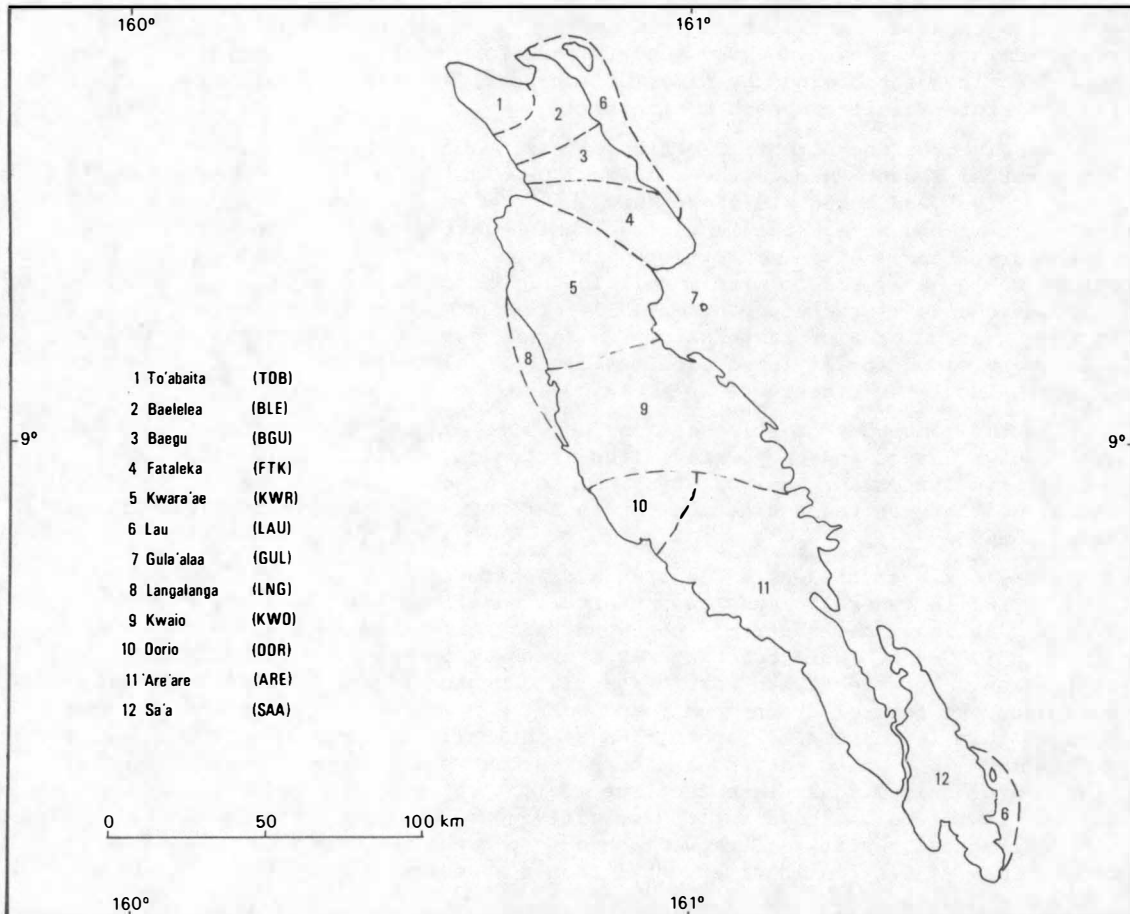
These three problems of phonological change somehow play a part in an even deeper problem for comparative linguistics, the problem of classifying the Santa Cruz and Reef Islands languages. The early investigators, Codrington (1885) and Ray (1926:447-455), classified the languages as Austronesian. More recently, Wurm (1970a, 1970b, 1976) has classified them as non-Austronesian and members of his East Papuan Phylum. In the latest instalment of the debate, Peter Lincoln (1978) has suggested that these languages could be classed as originally Oceanic. Wurm's reply (1978) attempts to strengthen his own thesis of Papuan substratum with Austronesian overlay by showing parallels with pidginisation processes. The basic arguments for the Papuan element are morphological and syntactic, and we have not documented any cases of word taboo affecting the languages at this level. However, a substratum hypothesis by itself does not satisfactorily account for all the phonological data. A long history of language changing word taboo must have some part in explaining the messy Austronesian that is found on Santa Cruz today.

1.2 The case of Malaita, Solomon Islands

Word taboo in the Malaitan languages (see Map 1) is based on a taboo against saying the name of a dead ancestor. From the spirits of dead ancestors comes the power by which the living attain success (Keesing and Fifi'i 1969:157). Thus for the Baegu culture and for Malaita in general, "veneration of ancestral spirits by means of pig sacrifice and observance of a strict taboo system is the essence of ... religion" (Ross 1973:53). One of these strict taboos is the name taboo. The basic principle behind the name taboo is the following:

> The name of a person ... is associated with the 'essence' of that person. The name of an [ancestor] acquires sacredness roughly corresponding to the sacredness of the [ancestral spirit].... Usage of a [linguistic] form associated with that name can impinge on the sacredness of the ancestor (Keesing and Fifi'i 1969:159).

Names are commonly built from common words. Thus not only does speaking the name become taboo, but also using the common words which may be inside the name. As a Kwara'ae man once explained to me, "To speak the name of an ancestor is to invoke his power, and one cannot therefore use the name lightly".

1 To'abaita   (TOB)
2 Baelelea   (BLE)
3 Baegu   (BGU)
4 Fataleka   (FTK)
5 Kwara'ae   (KWR)
6 Lau   (LAU)
7 Gula'alaa   (GUL)
8 Langalanga (LNG)
9 Kwaio   (KWO)
10 Dorio   (DOR)
11 'Are'are   (ARE)
12 Sa'a   (SAA)

Map 1: Languages and dialects of Malaita

Here are some further details on how the Malaitan word taboo works (taken from the Kwaio data of Keesing and Fifi'i 1969): In general, the older an ancestor, the more powerful and sacred he is. However, the name of a person who has died in the lifetime of those now living may become tabooed among his surviving relatives in respect to his memory, even though no special powers are yet attributed to him (p.159). Persons who die of leprosy or tuberculosis become sacred immediately (p.160). Sometimes a word sounding like the name, but not morphologically related to it, becomes tabooed as well (p.162). Tabooed forms cannot be uttered by the spirit's descendants, nor may they be uttered by others in their presence (pp.168-169). Breaking of the taboo requires that compensation be paid, usually in the form of a pig or shell money (p.169).

Common methods for finding replacement forms for tabooed words are semantic shift of an existing form (such as by analogy, metaphor, or generic-specific relationship), substitution of a form with semantic similarity or overlap, borrowing from another Malaitan language or from Pidgin English, modifying the tabooed form phonologically, inventing a circumlocutionary descriptive phrase, or using an alternative morphological derivation on the same base (pp.166-168).

Word tabooing of this nature has been attested in the literature for Kwaio (Keesing and Fifi'i 1969), To'abaita (Deck 1933:34), and Sa'a (Ivens 1927:274). I have observed it in Kwara'ao and 'Are'are as well (without yet checking in the other languages). This distribution covers the very northernmost group on the island down to the southernmost and is therefore sufficient for us to reconstruct this practice of tabooing the names of ancestral spirits (and related common words) for the Proto-Malaitan speech community.

To discover the potential effect of name tabooing on comparative Malaitan linguistics, I went through the Swadesh 100-word list with a To'abaita man (65 years of age) and asked him if he knew any To'abaita person (living or dead) with that word in his name. The result was that he attested names for 59% of the basic vocabulary items. Given more time to think and more help from neighbours he surely would have come up with more. The effect of name tabooing in inducing language change is therefore potentially great. Keesing has measured that effect in the Sinalagu area of East Kwaio. He found that 12% of the basic vocabulary items were taboo for at least some residents in all uses and another 5% were taboo in some linguistic constructions (Keesing and Fifi'i 1969:165).

In the remainder of this section I seek to measure the effect of word taboo on language change and comparative linguistics on Malaita. This effect is measured in six areas: lexicostatistics, lexical change, synonyms in reconstructions, doublets in reconstruction, irregular sound change, and recurring irregular sound change.

(1) Lexicostatistics: The standard lexicostatistic method (and indeed linguistics in general) makes an unstated assumption that there are no true synonyms in language. However, the word taboo situation is a valid exception (Thomson 1975:43). Word tabooing requires the speakers of a language to have at their disposal at least two ways of saying certain things. When all the speakers of a language control synonymous forms for the same wordlist item and the choice between them is culturally rather than semantically determined,[9] then a lexico-statistic method which records and compares only one response for each wordlist item can grossly miscalculate the true lexical relationship between languages. The error will be in the direction of yielding cognate percentages that are lower than the actual reality. From a diachronic perspective, this has the effect of overestimating linguistic divergence; from a synchronic perspective, it under-estimates dialect intelligibility.[10]

To test the effect of synonymy in underestimating the true relationship between languages, I have used a refinement to lexicostatistics which allows us to take account of synonyms. I first collected a 100-word list from the 12 major languages and dialects of Malaita, and computed cognate percentages in the standard way (considering only the first word given in each dialect). Then for each wordlist item in the five languages for which dictionaries are available — To'abaita (Waterston 1924), Lau (Fox 1974), Kwaio (Keesing 1975), 'Are'are (Geerts 1970), and Sa'a (Ivens 1929) — I looked up all the non-cognate forms from the other languages to see if that language had a cognate form (whether the same or different in meaning). For instance, the Lau wordlist gives kete for the word *head*. All other languages have a reflex of PML (Proto-Malaitan) *bwau. In the Lau dictionary I found that the Lau people also use a reflex of this form, gwou, to mean *head*. Thus Lau in terms of the first choice of my informant is not cognate with the rest of Malaita, but in terms of a synonymous form it is. Lexicostatistics seeks to measure lexical replacements and shifts in meaning. Since the Lau reflex of PML, gwou, has neither been replaced nor shifted in meaning, it can legitimately be counted as a cognate for lexicostatistical purposes.

The refinement of lexicostatistics is as follows. We liken one dialect to a hearer and the other to a speaker. Then we ask the question, "Does the hearing dialect have a word that is cognate with the first-choice word of the speaking dialect?" If so, a cognate is counted. From a synchronic interpretation, such a cognate suggests that the hearer would understand the word; from a diachronic interpretation, it suggests a historical relationship. The resulting measure is asymmetric. That is, the number of cognates with A hearing B may be different from the number with B hearing A.

The results of the computation are given in Table 2. Three percentages are given for each dialect pair. First is the percentage arrived at by the conventional method. Second is the percentage when synonyms are also counted (that is, no lexical replacement and no shift in meaning). I take this percentage to be the truest measure of cognates for lexicostatistics. Third is the percentage when cognates with a shift in meaning are also counted. By allowing semantic shift this percentage is not a true lexicostatistic measure by conventional standards. However, it does give a useful measure of common lexical content. Since many of the shifted meanings are still very similar in meaning, this third percentage may even more nearly predict intelligibility in some cases.

To give an idea of the overall effect of counting cognates which are synonyms and which have near meaning, the results are summarised in Table 3. For each of the five 'hearing' languages the range of the percentage increase and the average increase for both synonymous cognates and cognates with near meaning are given in the table. With all but one of the average effects of counting synonyms greater that 7%, true synonymy proves to be a significant factor in language relations on Malaita. This is especially true in the cases where the effect ranges as high as 16%, 18% and 22%.[11]

From a synchronic perspective, the increased cognate percentages incorporating synonyms give us a more accurate prediction of intelligibility between dialects. Following Swadesh's suggestion, 81% is commonly accepted as the dividing line between different languages versus different dialects and is therefore thought to be the general threshold of intelligibility. For TOB, the conventional computations put BGU, FTK, and LAU in a 75% to 77% relationship. The count incorporating synonyms brings all three relationships into an 80% to 86% range and indeed all are mutually intelligible with TOB. For LAU, the count with synonyms brings TOB, FTK, GUL, and KWR above the supposed threshold. The first

Table 2: Refined lexicostatistics for Malaitan languages

Three scores are given: (1) standard, (2) including synonyms, and
    (3) also including cognates with shift in meaning.

TOB, LAU, KWO, ARE, and SAA (on the left hand side) are counted as
    hearing the first word given by the other language. The
    languages are listed roughly in a north-to-south geographical
    ordering.

		TOB	BLE	BGU	FTK	KWR	LAU	GUL	LNG	KWO	DOR	ARE	SAA
TOB	(1)		83	76	75	66	77	70	66	54	52	54	51
	(2)		92	85	80	71	86	76	70	59	54	56	53
	(3)		96	89	85	76	92	85	79	70	67	68	64
LAU	(1)	77	84	80	77	67		79	63	61	52	54	49
	(2)	91	96	96	92	83		87	78	70	61	61	62
	(3)	98	99	99	98	91		93	89	84	72	76	71
KWO	(1)	54	55	53	62	60	61	72	61		59	53	47
	(2)	68	65	64	75	72	70	83	77		76	71	60
	(3)	75	74	73	82	76	74	88	84		82	80	70
ARE	(1)	54	49	50	53	53	54	58	61	53	75		57
	(2)	60	56	55	59	59	61	63	67	60	80		79
	(3)	69	68	60	71	67	71	74	79	75	85		81
SAA	(1)	51	47	49	49	49	49	49	53	47	54	57	
	(2)	58	54	59	60	59	55	55	64	54	62	67	
	(3)	63	63	68	67	64	63	66	73	67	72	76	

Table 3: Overall effect of refined lexicostatistics

	Increase to cognate percentage when counting synonymous cognates		Additional increase when counting cognates with meaning change	
	Range	Average	Range	Average
TOB	2-9%	5.3%	4-13%	8.1%
LAU	7-16%	12.2%	3-15%	8.5%
KWO	9-18%	13.1%	4-10%	7.0%
ARE	5-22%	7.5%	2-15%	9.2%
SAA	6-11%	8.5%	5-13%	8.6%
Overall		9.3%		8.3%

three are definitely intelligible with LAU. KWR is marginally so because of a pervasive metathesis process which makes aural recognition of cognate words difficult for the uninitiated. For the other three 'hearing' languages — KWO, ARE, SAA — I have not observed what the intelligibility relationships actually are. Note the striking asymmetry between ARE and SAA. ARE hearing SAA (79%) comes right up to the supposed threshold, but SAA hearing ARE (67%) is well below it. Thus, the results predict that ARE people may be able to understand SAA but not vice versa. Further investigations will be required to test this hypothesis.

From a diachronic perspective, the increased cognate percentages incorporating synonyms would alter our interpretation of the degree of divergence separating the languages. This could be especially problematic if trying to estimate the absolute time depth of divergence by glottochronology. Taking some of the more dramatic examples and using the usual retention rate of 80.5% per millenium, the following differences arise. The KWO to TOB increase of 54% to 68% represents a difference of 15 centuries versus 8 centuries. The LAU to KWR increase of 67% to 83% represents a difference of 9 centuries versus 4 centuries. The ARE to SAA increase of 57% to 79% represents a difference of 13 centuries versus 5 centuries. Obviously, glottochronology has its problems where word taboo has affected the pattern (and probably the rate) of lexical change.

(2) Lexical change: Conventional approaches to comparative linguistics admit only one kind of lexical change (as distinct from phonological or semantic changes to a lexical item); it is the process of replacement. A replacement, when form A with meaning 'x' is replaced by a different form B with the same meaning 'x', can be diagrammed as follows:

<div align="center">Lexical replacement: A 'x' > B 'x'</div>

Whether lexical change occurs by a family tree model of dialect splitting and divergence, or by a wave theory model of dialect borrowing and convergence, the same process of replacement explains lexical change.

The word tabooing situation, however, introduces another kind of lexical change which I am terming 'augmentation'. By lexical augmentation a synonym is added to the lexicon to co-exist with the original form. That is, form B with meaning 'x' is added to the lexicon to augment form A with the same meaning 'x' (without replacing it). This can be diagrammed:

<div align="center">Lexical augmentation: A 'x' > A 'x', B 'x'</div>

In order to determine the extent to which the tabooing situation has motivated lexical change via augmentation rather than replacement, I analysed lexical change in the items of the 100-word list for the 12 Malaitan languages and dialects. In Table 4, some lexical isogloss patterns demonstrating the two patterns of change are given. Example 1a shows a simple case of augmentation. Every Malaitan language reflects PML *bwau for the meaning *head*. However, LAU uses a synonym kete as its first choice without replacing its *bwau reflex. Contrast this pattern with example 2a which shows a simple replacement pattern. While all other languages reflect PML *ba'ita as the word for *big*, KWR has replaced it completely with doe.

Example 1b illustrates an augmentation pattern[12] in which synonymous forms can be reconstructed for PML. Thus the augmenting change dates back to the time of PML, or even earlier. Two PML words with the meaning *leaf* are reconstructable. Note, however, that today only three of the languages preserve these forms as synonyms; in most other languages there is a meaning shift in one form or the other. Nevertheless, the meaning *leaf* occurs today with both forms in both

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Table 4: Patterns of lexical change

Key to symbols:

X The language reflects this form.
X[1] In the case of synonyms, this is the first choice.
X* The form is reflected but with a different meaning.

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1. AUGMENTATION

	TOB	BLE	LAU	GUL	BGU	FTK	KWR	LNG	KWO	DOR	ARE	SAA
a. *head*												
PML *bwau	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
kete	X*	–	X[1]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
b. *leaf*												
PML *'aba	X[1]	X	X[1]	X	X*	X[1]	X*	X[1]	X	X	X*	X[1]
PML *rau	X*	–	X*	–	X[1]	X	X[1]	X	–	–	–	X
po'ore	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	X	–

2. REPLACEMENT

	TOB	BLE	LAU	GUL	BGU	FTK	KWR	LNG	KWO	DOR	ARE	SAA
a. *big*												
PML *ba'ita	X	X	X	X	X	X	–	X	X	X	X	X
doe	–	–	–	–	–	–	X	–	–	–	–	–
b. *nose*												
PML *bwalusu	X	–	–	–	–	–	–	X	–	–	–	X
PML *bwango	X*	–	X*	–	–	–	X*	–	X	X	X	X*
PML *ngora	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*

Table 5: Patterns of lexical change in Malaitan basic vocabulary

No lexical change		33%
Every language has the same form		
Augmentation pattern		36%
One PML form with local synonyms	15%	
Synonyms in PML	21%	
	36%	
Replacement pattern		32%
One PML form with local replacements	15%	
Multiple PML forms with local meaning shifts	8%	
No reconstructable PML forms	9%	
	32%	

northern and southern Malaita and must be reconstructed as PML for both forms. Contrast this with the replacement pattern in example 2b. Here there are three reconstructed forms. In this case, however, there are no synonyms today, nor do there appear to have been any in PML. Only the first listed form, *bwalusu, is reconstructed with the meaning *nose*. *bwango appears to have had an original meaning *mucus*, and its use as *nose* is an innovation in some southern languages. *ngora appears to have had an original meaning of *snore*, *snort* and *snout*, and its use as *nose* is an innovation in some northern languages. Here, meaning shifts have brought about true replacements.

To determine the extent to which the tabooing situation has motivated lexical change via augmentation rather than replacement, I examined each wordlist item to find which pattern of lexical change explained the overall distribution of forms. The results are in Table 5. In that table, 'local' refers to a change which is confined to a single language or small group of neighbouring ones and cannot be reconstructed for PML. The overall result is that 33% of the items show no lexical change, 36% show an augmentation pattern of lexical change, and 32% show a replacement pattern of lexical change. If we consider just the items that show lexical change, 53% have changed by augmentation. At least for the basic vocabulary, lexical change by augmentation is more frequent in this word tabooing situation than is change by replacement.

(3) Synonyms in reconstruction: A striking result of Table 5 is that synonyms must be reconstructed in PML for 21% of the basic vocabulary. (This count does not include phonological doublets.) Earlier in the paper, word tabooing was reconstructed as a cultural practice of the Proto-Malaitan speech community on the basis of its distribution in the daughter languages. The current result concerning reconstructable synonyms gives more direct evidence that the proto-speech community did practise word tabooing, in that it maintained synonyms for a significant proportion of the basic vocabulary.

The three aspects of comparative linguistics considered thus far have measured the impact of the word tabooing requirement of maintaining synonyms. The next three measure the impact of irregular sound change. One method of finding a word to replace a tabooed word is to modify the orginal word phonologically; another is to borrow the same word from a neighbouring dialect (that is, borrow their pronunciation). In both cases we would expect irregular sound correspondences in cognate words to be common. The data bear this out:

(4) Irregular sound correspondences: 34% of the 182 cognate sets found in the 100-word list display irregular sound correspondences.[13] (A more refined count which distinguishes spontaneous irregular changes from irregular correspondences due to borrowing of dialectal forms has yet to be attempted.) 34% is a large portion of the whole, but considerably less than the 55% found for Santa Cruz. Computations performed for language families without word tabooing are needed as a baseline for comparison.

(5) Recurring irregular sound changes: Certain spontaneous irregular sound changes (that is, they are not from borrowings) occur so commonly as to appear to be regular changes. A striking example is Kwaio's disposition toward changing d's to g's. Kwaio d is the regular reflex of PML *d, and g is the regular reflex of PML *g (Levy 1979:223). The Lau language has the same reflexes for these proto-phonemes. Scores of examples of the d:d and g:g correspondences between these two languages can be found. However, consider the following pairs of cognate words:

Kwaio	Lau	Meaning
gani	dani	*day, daylight*
logo	rodo	*night, dark*
-ga	-da	3rd person plural possessive
aga	ada	*look, see*
gamu	damu	KWO *chew*, LAU *smack the lips*
guigui	dudui	*vinegar ant*
ugu	udu	*a drop of water*
age	ade	*do, happen*
nagama	madama	*moon*

This g:d correspondence occurs repeatedly enough (and with no conditioning factor) that some comparativists might be tempted to reconstruct a subscripted or capital letter proto-phoneme to symbolise the correspondence. However, such an analysis is unjustified in terms of diachronic plausibility. There is no other language which suggests that the ancestral language had another phoneme, nor does the PML sound system (assuming that it was a natural phonological system) have room for another velar or alveolar stop phoneme. In fact, Kwaio itself gives counter evidence in that it has g-d doublets for three of these words (gani-dani, gamu-damu, guigui-duidui). The explanation for this kind of common irregular sound change is to be found in the mechanisms of word tabooing, not in regular inheritance from the proto-language.

This example suggests that in a word tabooing language family the conventional dichotomy between regular and irregular sound correspondences is not fully adequate for making decisions of cognacy and shared inheritance. We must admit a third class of 'common' sound correspondences which are sufficient to establish cognacy, but which indicate the working of a culturally induced spontaneous sound change (rather than a borrowing). That is, there are some regular ways to modify a form when it becomes taboo.

(6) Doublets in reconstruction: Doublets (that is, phonologically similar words with identical or near meanings) are very much in evidence throughout Malaita. Keesing and Fifi'i (1969:174-175) give fourteen sets for examples in their word taboo paper. They suggest two possible sources for these similar forms: coining of replacement forms by phonological modification or by borrowing. These sets are not necessarily restricted to 'doublets'; one contains five phonological alternatives for the same word. Many more examples of doublets can be found in the Kwaio dictionary as well as in all of the other Malaitan dictionaries. Some doublets are not confined to single languages but are sufficiently widespread as to be reconstructable. This gives further direct evidence that the kinds of taboo motivated language changing processes observed today must have been used by the PML speech community as well.

There appear to be at least seven doublets in the 100-word list. Four of these involve a phonological difference only:

PML	*mela,	*mena	*red*
	*ano,	*gano	*earth, ground*
	*dani	*dangi	*day*
	*sinali,	*singali	*moon*

Three more involve a slight difference in meaning as well:

PML   *bwaururu *knee, kneel* and *bouruuru *kneel*
               *ngidu *lip, mouth* and *ngisu *spit, saliva*
               *marawa *green, bluish* is the colour of *matawa *open sea*

In summary, two word-taboo motivated processes of language change are prevalent on Malaita: (1) the generation of synonyms (basically through meaning shifts or borrowings), and (2) the phonological modification of tabooed words (through spontaneous sound change or borrowing the pronunciation used by a neighbouring language). The impact of synonymy was measured to be the following: on average, counting synonyms as cognates raises cognate percentages 9.3% on a 100-word list, lexical change by augmentation is more frequent than lexical change by replacement, and synonyms must be reconstructed in PML for 21% of the items on the 100-word list. The impact of phonological modification is as follows: 34% of cognate sets on the 100-word list show irregular sound correspondences, spontaneous irregular sound changes occur frequently enough that we must define a class of irregular sound correspondences which still reflect direct inheritance rather than borrowing, and doublets must be reconstructed in PML for 7% of the items on the 100-word list.

1.3 Information from other authors

A number of authors have commented on the effects of word tabooing on cognate percentages and lexicostatistical survey techniques. The first of these was Dyen (1963:63-64). In his lexicostatistical classification of the Austronesian languages he noted that the Polynesian languages Tahitian and Paumotu regularly scored significantly lower than the other Polynesian languages when compared with non-Polynesian languages. Tahitian is well known for its practice of tabooing words sounding like a royal name (see Appendix, number 73). The average cognate percentage of these two languages with four non-Polynesian Oceanic languages (Rotuman, Fijian, Efate, and Gilbertese) was 16.5%; the average score of Hawaiian with these four languages was 24.1% and of Niue was 29.8%. That is, the tabooing languages scored an average 8% to 13% fewer cognates. Dyen suggests that the word tabooing custom "might ultimately favor the replacement of a larger number of words than normal".

Lithgow (1973) documents a 19% change in basic vocabulary over the past 50 years in the Austronesian language of Muyuw (Woodlark Island, Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea). Of the total change, 13% comprises lexical replacement, and the remaining 6% comprises phonological modification of the original word. Lithgow lists three causes for these changes (1973:106; see also Appendix, number 44): (1) one cannot say the name of a deceased clan relative, or any words with a similar sound, (2) one cannot say the names of parents-in-law and siblings-in-law, and (3) if a man has magic associated with a particular thing, he will never pronounce the normal word for it.

Sandra Callister (personal communication) reports that word tabooing has affected past cognate counts on Misima Island (another Austronesian language of the Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea). On Misima there are taboos on names of the dead and of affines (see Appendix, number 45). Callister reports that "there is virtually no dialect difference from village to village on Misima, yet an earlier lexicostatistical survey talks about cognate counts of 92% to 96% between villages".

The studies of three investigators in non-Austronesian languages of Papua New Guinea are relevant as well. In Kewa (Southern Highlands Province) three kinds of taboos affect the use of common words: affinal name taboos, taboos on names of the dead, and words made taboo by association with cult activities (see Appendix, letter G). Karl Franklin has done extensive survey work among Kewa dialects (Franklin 1968). Although he has not specifically tested for the effect

of word tabooing in lexicostatistical results, he suggests (personal communication) that the skewing could be as much as 15% to 20% on a standard 190-word list containing basic vocabulary and cultural vocabulary for New Guinea. Robert Larsen (1975:6) in a dialect survey of the Orokaiva language (Northern Province; see Appendix, letter H) found word tabooing and synonymy to be such a problem that he developed a phonostatistic method for analysing the results. This method measures not how many words are cognate, but how phonetically similar are cognate words, thus bypassing the problem of synonyms altogether. Les Bruce (1977) likewise found that word tabooing skewed lexicostatistical surveys (specifically working in the East Sepik Province). He suggests that in word tabooing areas a pilot survey should be first carried out to determine the most stable vocabulary for initial comparative purposes, and then items affected by word taboo should be eliminated from the survey wordlist.

Several authors have discussed how new forms to replace tabooed forms are coined. Bruce (1977) lists nine ways that the Alamblak of Papua New Guinea (a non-Austronesian group in the East Sepik Province; see Appendix, letter F) use to avoid saying words that form the tabooed names of affinal relatives. The first two are borrowing a new word or modifying the old one phonologically. The remaining seven are different semantic relations between the original word and the word chosen to replace it. These include using a more generic term, a more specific term, a caricaturisation, a term with extended meaning, a term with similar referent, a synonym, or an antonym.

Among the Buang, an Austronesian group of the Morobe Province in Papua New Guinea (see Appendix, number 34), Hooley (1972:502-505) reports that each personal name has a conventional 'taboo' name associated with it, which affinal relatives must use when referring to the bearer of the name and in place of the name whenever it occurs as a common word. He gives examples of four kinds of associations between the personal name and the taboo name: neither name has any meaning, the two names form a specific-generic pair, the two names are a synonymous pair, the taboo name bears a phonetic similarity to the personal name (although it has a totally unrelated meaning).

Dixon (1980:98-99) in generalising about how Australian languages replace tabooed words lists four methods: use a synonymous form already in the language (but only in a minority of languages in which "virtually every lexical item has a number of synonyms"), borrow from a neighbouring language, coin a new compound, or shift the meaning of a term already in the language.

In three languages for which published accounts are available, replacement forms are coined primarily by means of semantic relationships, not by borrowing or phonological modification. Franklin gives many examples of how this is done among the Kewa for both replacing tabooed names of affinal relatives (1967:79-80) and in creating a ritual pandanus language (1972:70-72) and a religious argot (1975:717-722). Diffloth (1980:160-161) gives examples of how the Semai, an Austro-Asiatic people of the Malay peninsula, coin words or expressions to replace the tabooed names of animals. The replacement forms are of two categories: 'disgracing names' based on words which make fun of the animal's appearance or behaviour, and 'secret names' which make a purposefully obscure association so as to prevent the animal from knowing that it is being named. Helen Fox (in press) in describing avoidance terms among the Big Nambas (an Austronesian group of Vanuatu; see Appendix, number 67) gives examples of three ways in which avoidance terms are coined: by substituting semi-synonymous terms already in the language, by using a descriptive phrase as a circumlocution, or by using a synonymous term not used anywhere in the language except as an avoidance term.

At the other end of the spectrum are languages where avoidance terms are coined strictly by phonological deformation. All the cases I have found are cases of pig-Latin-like sublanguages. Most examples are cases of 'disguised language' in which the purpose is to conceal the speaker's meaning from certain listeners. Other examples are cases of 'play languages' in which the purpose is basically to entertain. While the current examples do not deal directly with word taboos, I mention them here in the interest of exploring their connection in the future. In addition, cases of phonologically modified sublanguages are of relevance to the more general question of culturally induced irregular language change, as sublanguage forms may be adopted into the standard language.

Conklin describes disguised speech in two languages of the Philippines, Tagalog (1956) and Hanunoo (1959). Modifications include reordering of phonemes, reordering of syllables, substitution of phonemes, or addition of meaningless affixes. Larry Allen (see Appendix, number 11 for details) describes play languages used by children and teenagers in Kankanaey of the Philippines. Ernest Lee (see Appendix, number 8 for details) describes play languages in Roglai, an Austronesian language of Vietnam. In story telling there are special sublanguages formed by phonological modification used for certain characters in a story: 'turtle talk', 'buzzard talk, 'tiger talk', and 'corpse talk'.

Laycock (1969) describes three forms of modified language in Buin, a non-Austronesian language of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea: poetic language, adolescent play language, and a 'dog language' used in story telling (see Appendix, letter I for details). He notes four cases of modified forms being adopted into the standard language (1969:16). In a later paper, Laycock (1972) develops a typology of the mechanisms of modification used in play languages, based on examples from over 50 languages. Twelve of these are Austronesian.
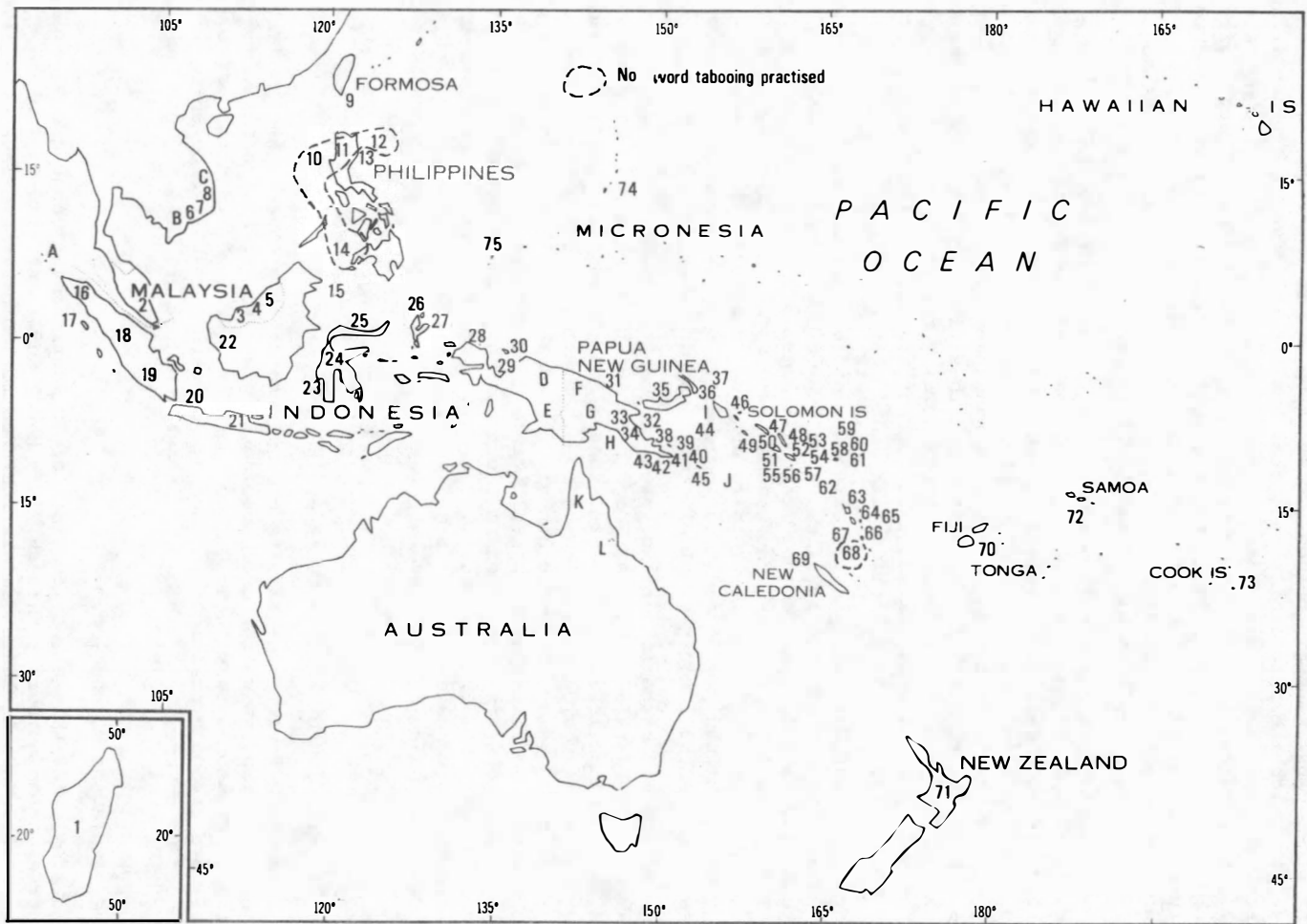
The metathesis of consonant and vowel in (mostly) final CV syllables in normal speech in Kwara'ae (Malaita, Solomon Islands) may be a related phenomenon (Simons 1977b, Clark 1981). In careful speech and in singing, unmetathesised forms are used (as they are in all uses in other Malaitan languages). One of the theories for the development of metathesis in Kwara'ae is that it was deliberately used as a device to make speech unintelligible to the ancestral spirits. (Note the relationship of this phenomenon to the tabooing of the names of these spirits discussed in Section 1.2.) Laycock (1982b) discusses this and other cases of metathesis in Austronesian languages and presents a case for 'deliberate' metathesising (such as in disguised or play language) in some of the examples.

2. THE DISTRIBUTION OF WORD TABOO IN AUSTRONESIA

This section reports the results of a literature search and questionnaire survey aimed at finding where word tabooing is practised in Austronesia, and of what kinds. First the sample and methodology are described, then each of the types of word tabooing practices is considered in turn: name taboos on relatives, name taboos on chiefs, name taboos on the dead, and other forms of word taboo.

2.1 The sample and methodology

The sample for this survey consists of 75 Austronesian languages.[14] These are plotted as the numbers 1 through 75 in Map 2 and identified in Table 6. Twelve non-Austronesian languages are included for comparison. These are plotted as the letters A through L.

FORMOSA

No word tabooing practised

HAWAIIAN IS

PHILIPPINES

PACIFIC OCEAN

MICRONESIA

MALAYSIA

INDONESIA

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

SOLOMON IS

SAMOA

FIJI

TONGA

COOK IS

NEW CALEDONIA

AUSTRALIA

NEW ZEALAND

Map 2: Distribution of languages in the sample

Table 6: Identification of languages in the sample

(Name, location)

1. Madagascar (source gives no particular dialect)
2. Malay, Malay peninsula, West Malaysia
3. Sea Dyak, Sarawak, East Malaysia
4. Tatana, Sabah, East Malaysia
5. Labuk Kadazan, Sabah, East Malaysia
6. Eastern Cham, Vietnam
7. Chru, Vietnam
8. Roglai, Vietnam
9. Yami, Botel Tobago Island, Formosa
10. Bolinao, Luzon, Philippines
11. Kankanaey, Luzon, Philippines
12. Eastern Bontoc, Luzon, Philippines
13. Ifugao: Amganad, Luzon, Philippines
14. Chavacano, west Mindanao, Philippines
15. Central Sinama, Sulu Archipelago, Philippines
16. Achinese, NW Sumatra, Indonesia
17. Nias, Nias Island, Indonesia
18. Karo-Batak, central Sumatra, Indonesia
19. Batak, central Sumatra, Indonesia
20. Sundanese, west Java, Indonesia
21. Javanese, central and east Java, Indonesia
22. Dyak, west Borneo, Indonesia
23. Bolang Mongondo, west Sulawesi, Indonesia
24. Alfoors of Poso, central Sulawesi, Indonesia
25. Alfoors of Minahassa, northern Sulawesi, Indonesia
26. Alfoors of Halmahera, Indonesia
27. Tobaru, Halmahera, Indonesia
28. Nufoors, Numfor Island, Irian Jaya, Indonesia
29. Serui, Tapen Island, Irian Jaya, Indonesia
30. Biak, Biak Island, Irian Jaya, Indonesia
31. Kairiru, Kairiru Island, Papua New Guinea
32. Jabem, Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea
33. Patep, Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea
34. Buang, Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea
35. Nakanai, central north coast of New Britain, Papua New Guinea
36. Duke of York, Duke of York Islands, east New Britain, Papua New Guinea
37. Sursurunga, New Ireland, Papua New Guinea
38. Iduna, D'Entrecasteaux Islands, Papua New Guinea
39. Yamalele, D'Entrecasteaux Islands, Papua New Guinea
40. Dobu, Dobu Island, Papua New Guinea
41. Tawala, northern shore Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea
42. Wagawaga, SW shore of Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea
43. Suau SE tip of Papua New Guinea
44. Muyuw, Woodlark Island, Papua New Guinea
45. Misima, Misima Island, Papua New Guinea
46. Alu, Shortland Islands, Solomon Islands
47. Kia, NW Santa Isabel, Solomon Islands
48. Maringe, central Santa Isabel, Solomon Islands

Table 6: continued...

49. Ghari, west Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands
50. Birao east Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands
51. Rennellese, Rennell Island, Solomon Islands
52. To'abaita, NW Malaita, Solomon Islands
53. 'Are'are, south Malaita, Solomon Islands
54. Ulawa, Ulawa Island, Solomon Islands
55. Arosi, west San Cristobal, Solomon Islands
56. Bauro, central San Cristobal, Solomon Islands
57. Kahua, east San Cristobal, Solomon Islands
58. Owa, Santa Ana Island, Solomon Islands
59. Aiwo, Reef Islands, Solomon Islands
60. Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz Island, Solomon Islands
61. Aba, Utupua Island, Solomon Islands
62. Banks Islands, Vanuatu
63. Motlav, Saddle Island, Vanuatu
64. Aoba, NE Aoba Island, Vanuatu
65. West Omba, west Aoba Island, Vanuatu
66. Raga, northern Pentecost Island, Vanuatu
67. Big Nambas, NW Malekula, Vanuatu
68. Fila, Efate Island, Vanuatu
69. Belep, Belep Island, New Caledonia
70. Taveuni Island, Fiji
71. Maori, New Zealand
72. Samoan, Samoan Islands
73. Tahitian, French Polynesia
74. Ponape, Caroline Islands
75. Yapese, Yap Island, Caroline Islands

A. Nicobar Islands, India
B. Chrau, Vietnam
C. Katu, Vietnam
D. Kwerba, north coast Irian Jaya, Indonesia
E. Muyu, south coast Irian Jaya, Indonesia
F. Alamblak, East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea
G. Kewa, Southern Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea
H. Orokaiva, Northern Province, Papua New Guinea
I. Buin, south Bougainville, Papua New Guinea
J. Yele, Rossel Island, Papua New Guinea
K. Gudang, Cape York Peninsula, Australia
L. Dyirbal, Queensland, Australia

Table 6: Identification of languages in the sample

Pawley (1975) estimates that there are approximately 500 Austronesian languages. Thus the current survey draws on a 15% sample. Of these 500 languages, about 200 belong to the Western Austronesian subgroup and the other 300 to the Eastern Austronesian (or Oceanic) subgroup. In the current survey, the very same proportion is kept with 30 of the languages from the Western subgroup and 45 from the Oceanic. The general agreement among scholars appears to be that the dividing line between Western and Eastern Austronesian falls just

to the east of Geelvink Bay in Irian Jaya (Pawley 1975, Capell 1976b:34ff). Thus in this sample, languages 1 through 30 are Western Austronesian, and languages 31 through 75 are Oceanic.[15]

In Table 6, the 75 languages are identified as to language name and island where spoken. In the Appendix a full listing of the data and sources for each language is given. The sources are of two types. The first is published ethnographic accounts. The second is contemporary field linguists, anthropologists, and native speakers who filled in and returned a questionnaire which I circulated. The questionnaire is appended to this paper.

In defining 'taboo' for this study, I have used a broad definition: any practice of avoidance. Taboos come in different strengths, from social restrictions which carry the stigma of embarrassment when they are broken, to sacred prohibitions which bring down the wrath of the supernatural when broken. Since the sources, in general, are not so detailed as to define what sanctions the avoidance practices or what outcome results from a breach, it is not possible to distinguish different degrees of taboo and I have therefore lumped them all together.
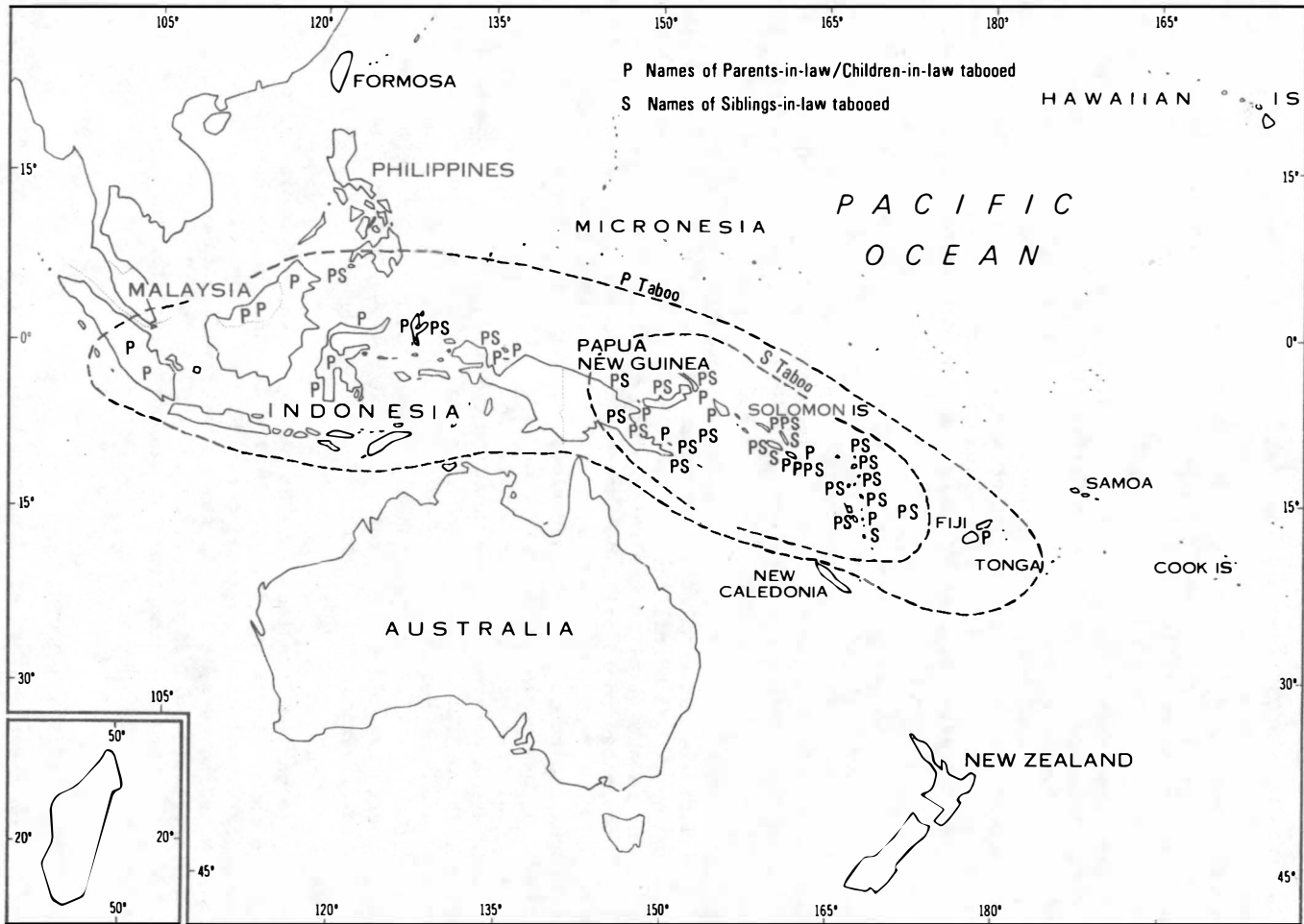
As for method in reconstruction, my criterion for suggesting that a particular tabooing practice be reconstructed for a subgroup of languages is that at least 50% of the languages in this sample which are in that subgroup reflect that kind of taboo. Note that the isogloss loops drawn on the maps do not mean that every language inside has the particular practice, but that at least 50% of the languages do.

An important fact to keep in mind is that even for the 75 languages in this sample, the data are not complete. Many respondents to the questionnaire remarked that they had not known of all the practices they reported until they had received the questionnaire and elicited the information to fill it out. This suggests that a number of responses could still be incomplete. However, it is especially with regard to the data from published sources that the data are incomplete. I have found ethnographic accounts to be notorious for not describing word tabooing practices when they do in fact occur. Monographs by Hogbin (1939) and Ross (1973) on two north Malaitan groups and an article by Davenport (1964) on Santa Cruz social structure are three examples just from the two groups of languages discussed in Section 1.1 and 1.2. Thus, just because word tabooing is not reported in an ethnography, does not mean that it does not exist. Furthermore, just because an author describes one kind of word tabooing, does not mean that he has described all word tabooing practices. The results which follow can therefore be viewed as reporting a lower limit. More complete data would undoubtedly uncover more word tabooing.
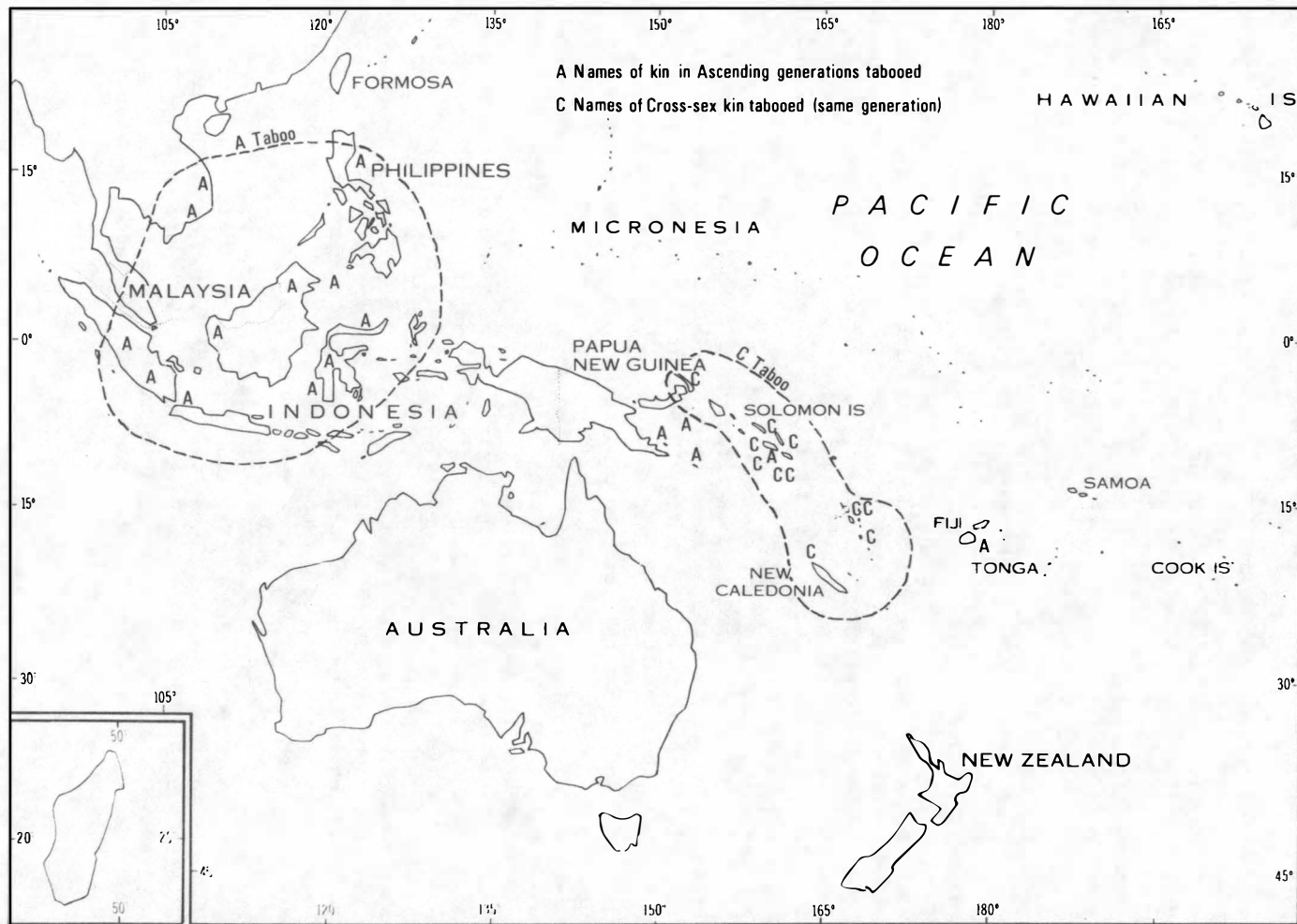
Map 2 designates five languages as having no known tabooing practices: four languages in the Philippines (10, 11, 12, and 14) and the Polynesian outlier Fila in Vanuatu (68). All other 70 languages attest some sort of word tabooing practice. Note, however, that this sample is skewed in favour of languages with tabooing practices. This is because we cannot in general get the information that there is no word tabooing from the ethnographic literature, only from questionnaires.

2.2 Names of relatives tabooed

Taboos on the names of relatives are treated in Maps 3 and 4. Map 3 plots the distribution of name taboos on affinal relatives. Map 4 plots the distribution of name taboos on consanguineal relatives.

P   Names of Parents-in-law/Children-in-law tabooed

S   Names of Siblings-in-law tabooed

FORMOSA

PHILIPPINES

MICRONESIA

HAWAIIAN   IS

PACIFIC

OCEAN

P Taboo

MALAYSIA

PS

P P

P

PS

P PS

PS

P

PAPUA
NEW GUINEA

S Taboo

P

PS

PS

P

PS

INDONESIA

P

P

PS

P P

PS

SOLOMON IS

PS

P

P

PS

PS

P

PS

PS

SAMOA

PS

S

PS

PS

PS

P P PS

PS

P

PS

PS

P

FIJI

P

PS

P

COOK IS

S

TONGA

NEW
CALEDONIA

AUSTRALIA

NEW ZEALAND

Map 3: Affinal name taboo

Map 4: Consanguineal name taboo

     In Map 3, two varieties of affinal name taboos are distinguished and plotted.
Each 'P' marks where there is a name taboo involving parents-in-law and children-
in-law. Each 'S' marks where there is a name taboo involving siblings-in-law.
If a language has name taboos on all affinal relatives, then both 'P' and 'S' are
marked.

     The results show that 43 of the 75 languages in the sample (or 57%) have
some form of the parents-in-law/children-in-law name taboo. For six of the
languages (5, 24, 25, 34, 45, 65) the sources list other kinds of relatives in
name taboo relationship, but then observe that it is the parents-in-law taboo
which is the strictest. The parents-in-law/children-in-law name taboo, both by
its wide distribution and its relative strength with respect to other relationship
taboos, appears to be a fundamental aspect of Austronesian culture. I therefore
reconstruct it as being a cultural practice of the Proto-Austronesian speech
community.

     The data also lead us to an indication of exactly what form this Proto-
Austronesian parents-in-law name taboo took. In the synchronic data there are
three variables involved: (1) whether the taboo involves the father-in-law, the
mother-in-law, or both; (2) whether the taboo involves the son-in-law, daughter-
in-law, or both; and (3) whether the taboo is ascending (only names of parents-
in-law tabooed), descending (only names of children-in-law tabooed), or reciprocal
(names tabooed in both directions). For the first variable, 38 of the 43 languages
involve both the fathers- and mothers-in-law in the taboo. For the second
variable, 33 of the 43 languages involve both the sons- and daughters-in-law in
the taboos; nine involve the son-in-law only; while one involves only the
daughter-in-law. For the third variable, 24 of the 43 languages report reciprocal
taboo relations; 17 report ascending only relationships, while the remaining two
report descending taboos. On the basis of these results, I reconstruct the Proto-
Austronesian affinal name tabooing practice to be a reciprocal taboo between
parents-in-law and their children-in-law.

     The second kind of affinal name taboo marked in Map 3, taboos between
siblings-in-law, is not distributed widely enough to qualify as a Proto-Austronesian
characteristic. Only 25 languages have this kind of taboo. Note, however, that
22 of these occur in Papua New Guinea,[16] Solomon Islands, or Vanuatu. The sample
includes 36 Melanesian languages from these three countries and 22 of them (or 61%)
have a sibling-in-law taboo. Thus it is likely that the sibling-in-law taboo can
be reconstructed for a large subgroup of Oceanic, or even for Oceanic as a whole.
Note also that two of the three cases outside of Oceania are in the border area
of Halmahera and Geelvink Bay. The data are not conclusive enough to suggest
exactly what form this taboo might have had. In 12 of the 22 cases, sources
indicate that the taboo extends to all siblings-in-law; in the other ten cases
only certain sibling-in-law relations are involved, such as between brothers-in-
law, or between sisters-in-law, or between siblings-in-law of the opposite sex or
of the same sex, or only between men who have married sisters.

     Map 4 plots the distribution of consanguineal (or blood relative) name
taboos. Each 'A' marks where there is a taboo involving ascending generations,
that is, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and the like. A few languages
reported that the names of all relatives are tabooed. These are included under
this code. Each 'C' marks a taboo involving a cross-sex relationship, normally
in the same generation. Nine of the ten cases are of name taboos between a
brother and a sister.

Seventeen languages have the ascending generations type of taboo. The distribution of these is not wide enough to ascribe to Proto-Austronesian. However, 12 of the cases are in central Western Austronesian languages in the sample. Thus it may be something that can be reconstructed for major subgroups of Western Austronesian or for Western Austronesian as a whole. Of the examples 70% are of taboos which are ascending only (that is, children do not say names of parents, but parents do of children), while the other 30% are reciprocal.

There are ten instances of the cross-sex taboo, with possibly an eleventh instance (see Appendix, number 66), and each of these is in Melanesia. They are confined to an area including New Ireland, Solomon Islands (excluding the Santa Cruz group), Vanuatu (excluding the Banks group), and New Caledonia. Within this area, 50% of the languages in the sample have this taboo and it therefore seems to be a taboo reconstructable for at least some subgroups of Oceanic. In nine cases the taboo is between a brother and a sister (often extended to cousins who are 'clan brothers and sisters'), and this I would take to be the original form of the taboo. The one variant is a name taboo between relatives of different generations who are of opposite sexes.

Two other types of name taboo deserve mention here. One is a taboo on saying one's own name. Four languages in the sample report this kind of avoidance practice (see Appendix, number 19, 39, 44, 57). The other is a taboo on saying the name of a close friend or companion. This also is reported in four languages (see Appendix, numbers 29, 38, 40, 63).
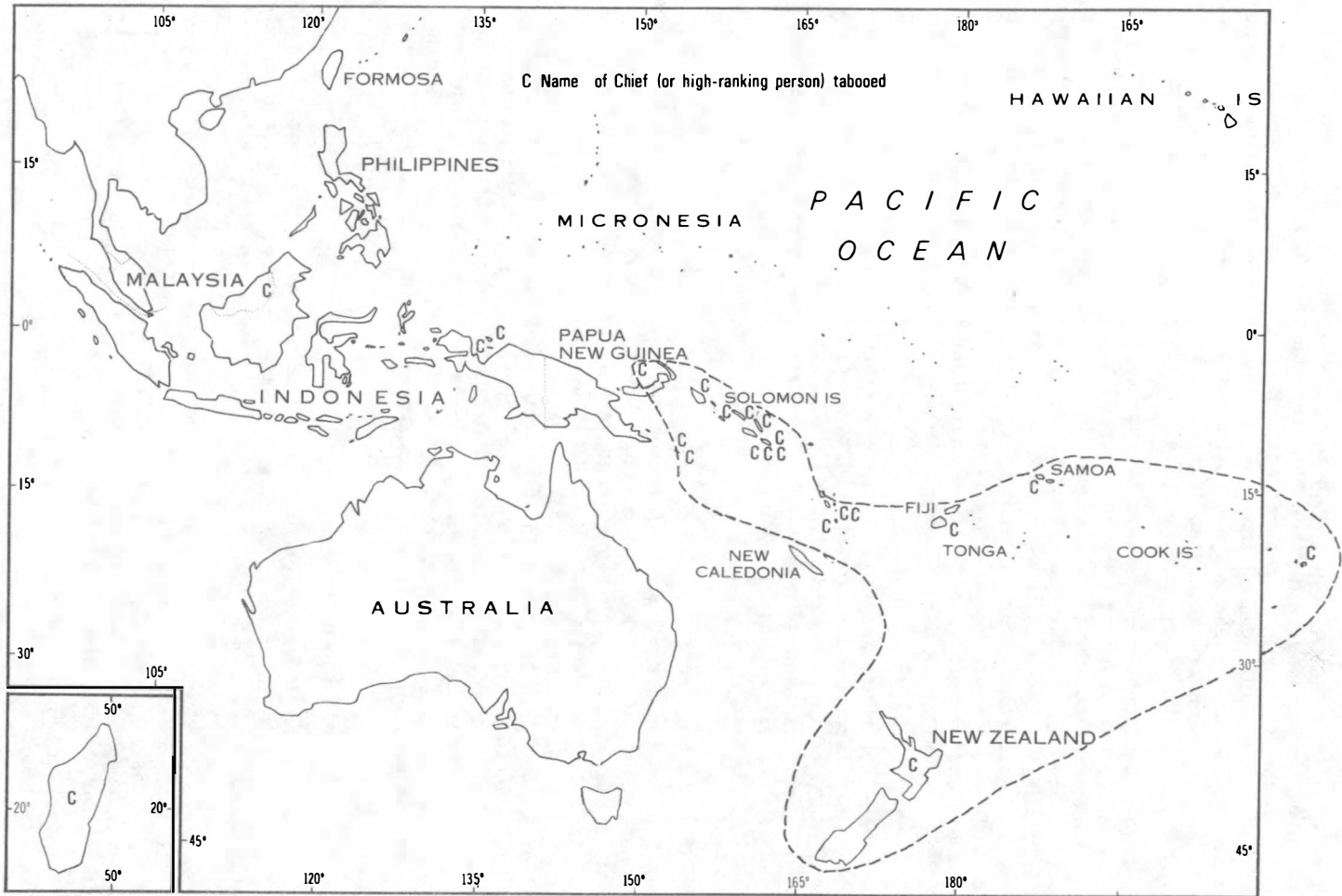
2.3. Names of chiefs tabooed

Map 5 plots the distribution of taboos against saying the name of the chief or other persons of high rank. The results show that such a taboo occurs in 22 languages of the sample. Eighteen of these are in Oceania and two more in the border area of Geelvink Bay. Within Oceania they are concentrated in New Britain, the Solomons, Woodlark, Misima, central Vanuatu, Fiji, and Polynesia. Within this area, 18 of 24 (or 75%) languages in the sample have taboos against saying the name of high-ranking people. This therefore appears to be a taboo reconstructable for at least some subgroups of Oceanic.[17] Of the 22 taboos of this nature, 14 are described by the sources as being a taboo against saying the name of the chief of a tribe or clan or village; seven sources speak in terms of big men, leading men, or high-ranking men; and one (Tahitian) speaks of tabooing the name of the king.
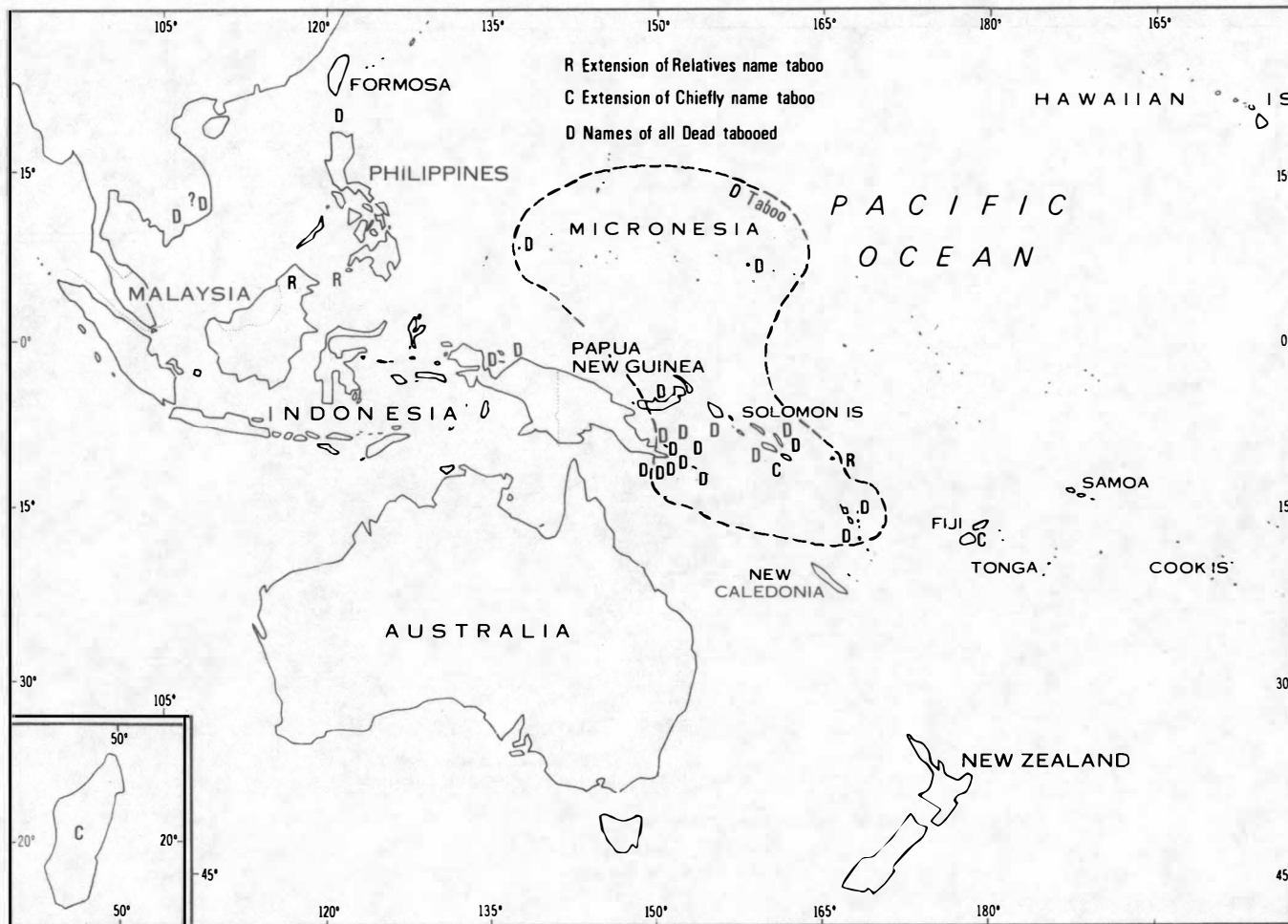
2.4 Names of the dead tabooed

Map 6 plots the distribution of taboos against saying the names of the dead. Each 'R' marks a case in which the taboo is simply an extension of a name taboo on relatives; that is, those relatives whom it is taboo to name while they are alive, it is still taboo to name after they have died. Each 'C' marks a case in which the taboo is simply an extension of the name taboo on chiefs; that is, it is taboo to call the chief's name while he is alive and also after he has died. The remaining cases, marked by 'D', are cases of a new phenomenon, that of tabooing the names of all dead people. In three of the cases the taboo is not everlasting, but holds for a limited time period only.
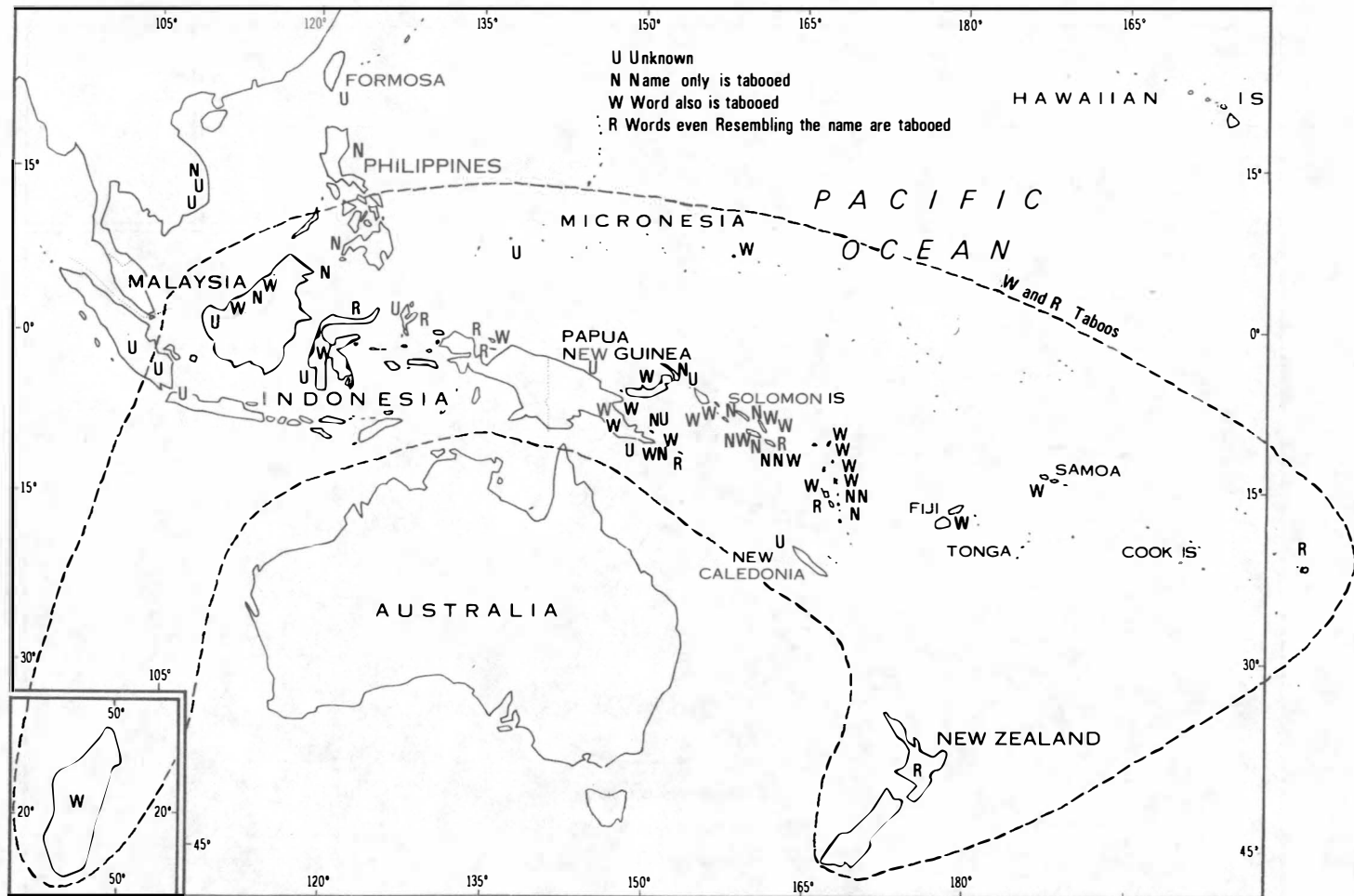
There are only three cases of the extension to the relatives taboo and three to the chiefs taboo. Thus these extensions do not prove to be a significant form of the taboo. The full taboo on names of the dead is significant, however. It

Map 5: Chiefly name taboo

Map 6: Names of the dead tabooed

Legend:
R Extension of Relatives name taboo
C Extension of Chiefly name taboo
D Names of all Dead tabooed

U Unknown
N Name only is tabooed
W Word also is tabooed
R Words even Resembling the name are tabooed

FORMOSA

PHILIPPINES

HAWAIIAN   IS

P A C I F I C

MICRONESIA

O C E A N

W and R Taboos

MALAYSIA

PAPUA
NEW GUINEA

SOLOMON IS

INDONESIA

SAMOA

FIJI

NEW
CALEDONIA

TONGA

COOK IS

AUSTRALIA

NEW ZEALAND

Map 7: Name taboos as word taboos

occurs in 21 languages of the sample, and possibly historically in a 22nd. Seventeen of these 21 languages are in Oceania and two more are in the border area of Geelvink Bay. Again this is a taboo that can be reconstructed for major subgroups of Oceanic. All languages in the sample on the SE tip of New Guinea and all outlying islands have this taboo. So do some languages in New Britain, the Solomons, and central Vanuatu, as well as the two Micronesian languages in the sample.

2.5 Name taboos and language change

In most cases, a name taboo goes deeper than the name itself. When the name itself is a meaningful word (or is derived from one), that word may also become taboo in its common use. Thus by extension, the name taboo becomes a word taboo. It is these word taboos that are of special interest to the comparative linguist, because when words of a language become taboo, language change must take place to fill the void. If all of the name taboos analysed thus far were limited to simple name taboos, then the distributions and reconstructed tabooing practices would be of interest only to the culture historian. However, if these name taboos also entail word taboos, then they are of vital interest to the language historian as well.

In Map 7 the distribution of simple name taboos versus those which extend to word taboos is plotted. This map shows how far the name taboos plotted in Maps 3 to 6 extend. Altogether, 65 of the 75 languages in the sample have some sort of name taboo. Each 'U' marks a case in which it is unknown (because of inadequacy of the source) whether or not the name taboo extends to the use of that name as a common word. Most of the unknown cases come from sources taken from published literature. Each 'N' marks a case in which the name only is tabooed. In 12% of these cases all names are meaningless; in the remaining 88%, languages which can form names from meaningful words do not extend the taboo to the common word. Each 'W' marks a case in which the common word from which the name is derived is also tabooed from its normal use. Each 'R' marks an even further extension of the word taboo. In these cases, words even resembling the tabooed name are also tabooed. Thus words that rhyme or words that share common syllables and so on, may become taboo, depending on the way the particular language judges similarity.

The total counts for each category are as follows:

Category	*Number of cases*
Unknown	15
Known	50
Name only	16 (32%)
Word also	25 (50%)
Even resembling	9 (18%)

The overall result is that in over two-thirds of the cases where the category is known, the name taboo does extend to a word taboo and thus causes language change. In the 18% of the languages where words even resembling the tabooed word must be changed, we can expect an especially heavy impact of word taboo on language change. Another result is that in 48 of the 50 (or 96%) known cases, names can be formed from common words.
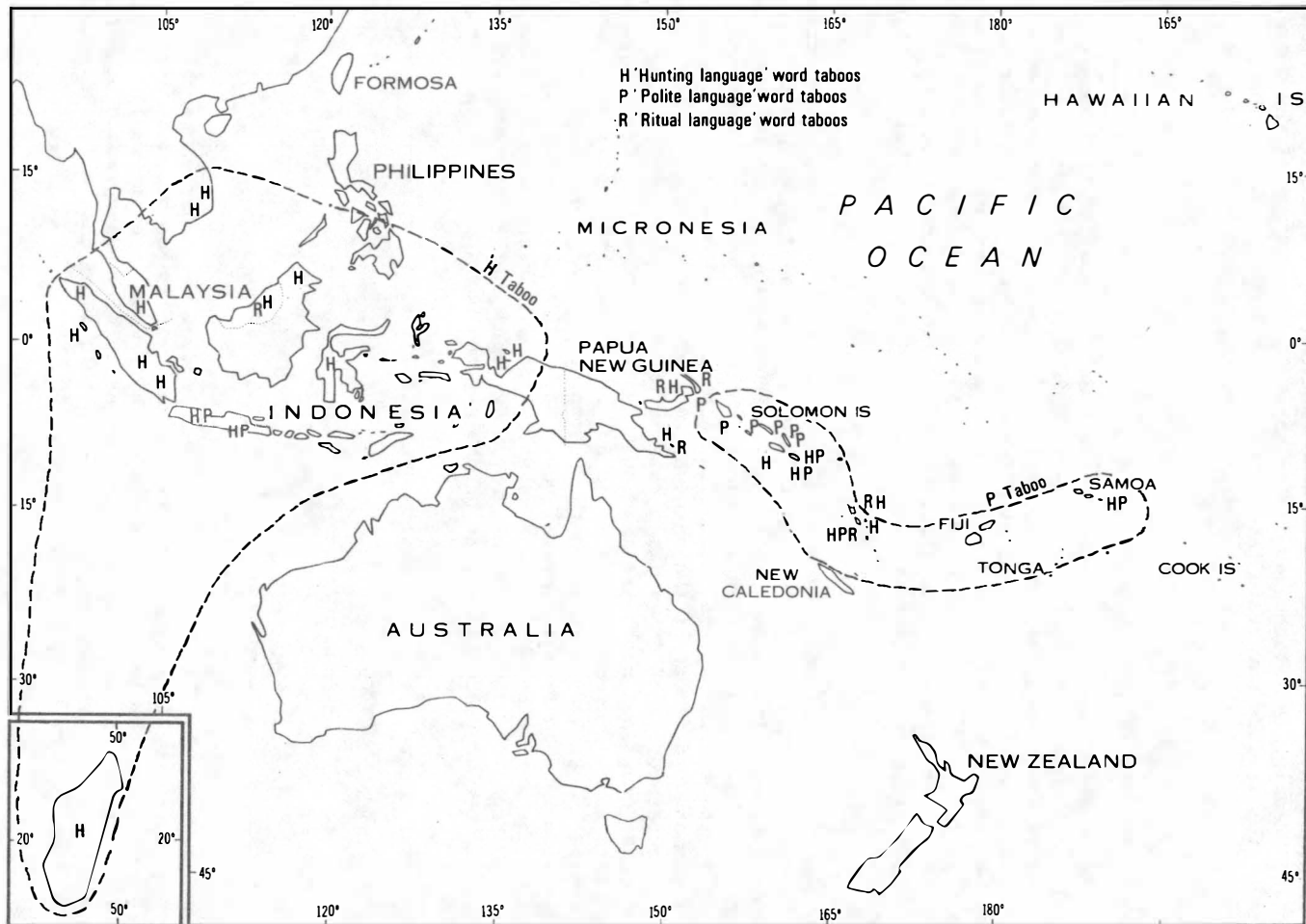
Map 8: Other forms of word taboo

The language changing word taboos are distributed evenly throughout Austronesia. Unfortunately, most of the unknown cases are in Western Austronesia so the data there are sparse. However, 65% of the known cases there are language changing word taboos, which suggests that there is not a significant difference between West and East.

The evidence is sufficiently strong to allow us to make two reconstructions. First, the Proto-Austronesian speech community formed names from common words. Second, all the name taboos reconstructed thus far extended to word taboos.
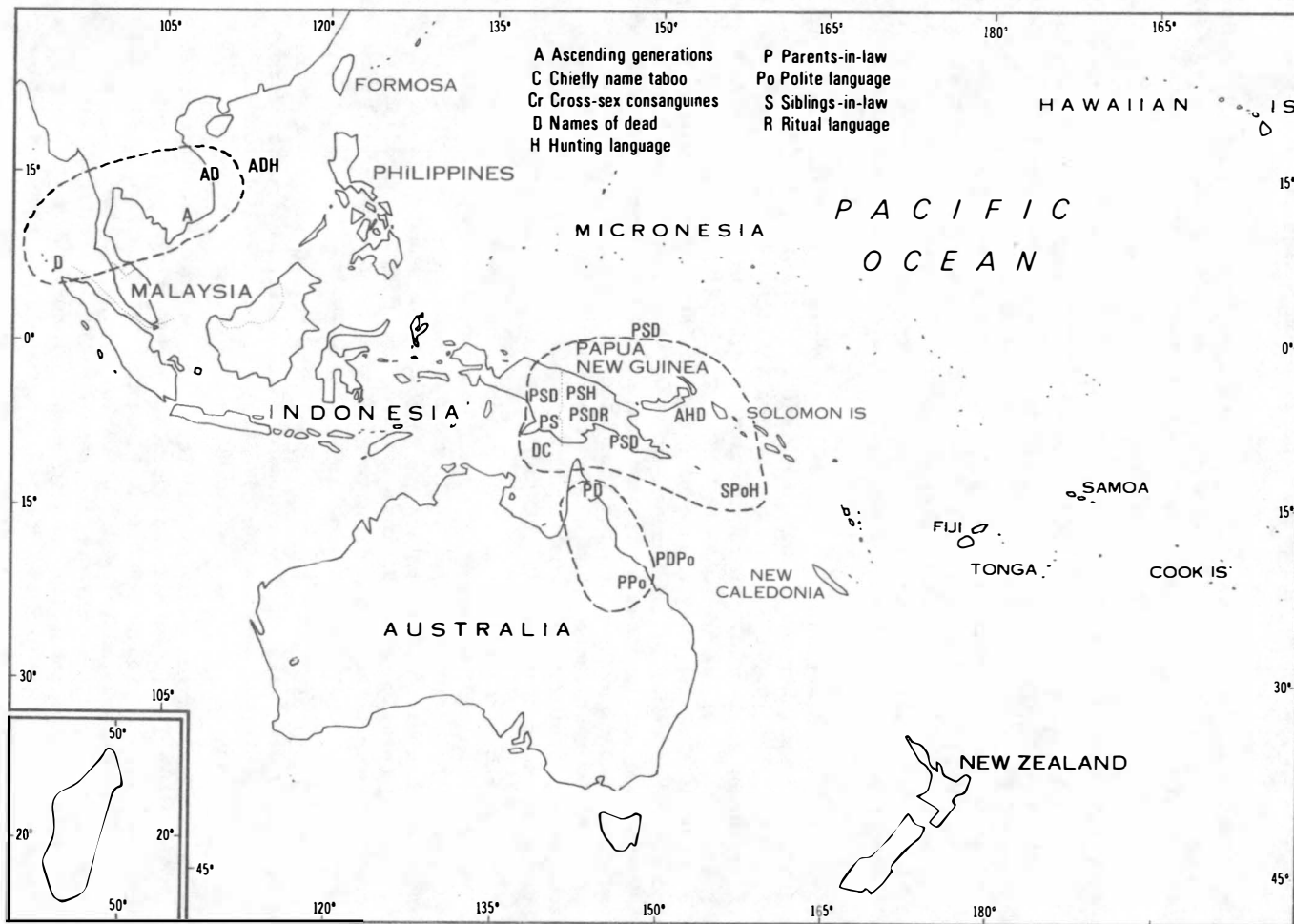
2.6 Other forms of word taboo

In the sample, three other types of word taboo occur frequently in Austronesia,[18] word tabooing customs which do not derive from name taboos. On the surface, some of these practices may not seem like word taboo, however, they do fit a broad definition of word taboo as any type of word avoidance. These are all cases in which the use of normal language is avoided because of the social context in which it is used. Of interest to the comparative linguist is the fact that all of these practices require the native speakers to have more than one way to talk about the same thing (denotative synonyms), with the choice depending on the context.

Map 8 plots the distribution of these other forms of word taboo. Each 'H' marks a language in which special 'hunting' language is employed. This kind of taboo takes many forms, but the basic motivation behind them all seems to be the deception of the spirit world. In the hunting form, hunters taboo the names of game they are seeking or the weapons they use. In the fishing form, fishermen taboo the names of the fish they are setting out to catch or the implements associated with the task. In the harvest form, workers in the harvest fields are required to use a special vocabulary. In the mining form, miners taboo the names of the ores they are excavating and the tools they do it with. All these share a common thread and I have lumped them all together under 'hunting' language. I have also grouped here certain cases in which animal names are tabooed, but the source brings out no connection with hunting.

Each 'P' marks a case of 'polite' language. The two cases in Western Austronesia, Javanese and Sundanese, are well known cases of status styles in which the speaker selects the proper style to use based on his status in relation to the addressee and based on familiarity as well. The cases in Eastern Austronesia are generally taboos against speaking about certain body parts or possessions of respected men (and strangers, in some cases) with normal vocabulary. Special honorific vocabulary is available for this purpose.

Each 'R' marks a case of ritual language (also termed argots or secret languages). These are cases where a group of insiders uses a special form of language in order to preserve some magic, ritual, or cult. Often secrecy or keeping outsiders out of the know are behind their use.

The results are as follows: The hunting language word taboos occur in 24 languages. Of these 15 are in Western Austronesia. These comprise 50% of the languages in Western Austronesia and thus I suggest that this kind of word tabooing practice can be reconstructed for Western Austronesia. The other nine cases in Oceania represent only 20% of the Oceanic sample. This is not high enough to reconstruct this kind of taboo for Oceanic as well; however, future investigation may uncover a stronger case for the 'hunting language' word taboo as a pan-Austronesian phenomenon.

A Ascending generations   P Parents-in-law
C Chiefly name taboo   Po Polite language
Cr Cross-sex consanguines   S Siblings-in-law
D Names of dead   R Ritual language
H Hunting language

MAP 9: Word taboo in NAN languages

Polite language taboos occur in two Western languages and ten Oceanic languages. These Oceanic cases represent 50% of the languages in the sample which are in the Solomons chain, central Vanuatu, and central Polynesia.[19] Thus it appears to be a practice reconstructable for at least some Oceanic subgroups. Note that this practice may be related to the chiefly name taboo already reconstructed for parts of Oceanic. The use of honorific language toward chiefs and big men is an even stronger form of honorific taboo than the name taboo. Deeper study may be able to establish a clear link between the two.

The third practice, ritual languages, occurs only in one Western and five Oceanic languages.[20] Thus on the current evidence this cannot be reconstructed for any subgroup.

Another practice deserves mention. These are play languages (or disguised languages) in which the normal language is systematically modified phonologically either for the purpose of entertainment or secrecy. Eight languages in the sample report some form of this, evenly split between Western and Eastern Austronesian (see Appendix, numbers 2, 8, 11, 21, 63, 66, 71, 72).

2.7 Summary list of reconstructed word tabooing practices

For the Proto-Austronesian speech community, there was:
    (1) ·a name taboo between parents-in-law and children-in-law.

For Proto-Western-Austronesian, or at least major subgroups of it, there was:
    (2) a name taboo on consanguineal relations of ascending generations, and
    (3) hunting language word taboos.

For Proto-Oceanic, or at least major subgroups of it, there was:
    (4) a name taboo between siblings-in-law,
    (5) a name taboo between consanguines of the same generation but opposite sex,
    (6) a taboo on the names of chiefs,
    (7) a taboo on the names of the dead, and
    (8) the use of honorific vocabulary with respected men (possibly related to 6 above).

The Proto-Austronesian speech community formed names from common words. All of these name taboos extended to a taboo on the common use of words occurring in the name.

2.8 Word taboo in non-Austronesian languages

Word taboo is not an Austronesian distinctive; it is found in the language families which neighbour Austronesian. However, by comparing the kinds of taboos found in Austronesian as opposed to those found in the neighbouring families, we see that the form of word taboo in Austronesian is distinctive. Map 9 plots the types of word taboo found in the 12 non-Austronesian languages included in the sample.

In the three Austro-Asiatic languages two types of taboo are observed: the taboo on the names of consanguineal relatives (A), and the taboo on names of the dead (D). Diffloth (1975:483) notes that in Austro-Asiatic generally animals are subject to numerous taboos, and describes specifically for the Semai how such word taboos work (1980). This suggests a widespread distribution of the hunting language taboo as well.

In the seven Papuan Languages, three types of taboo are found in at least four languages: the parents-in-law name taboo (P), the siblings-in-law name taboo (S), and the taboo on names of the dead (D). These three types of taboo are further evidenced in the five additional Papuan languages listed in the addenda to the Appendix.

In the two Australian languages, three types of taboo are found: the parents-in-law name taboo (P), a 'polite' language used in the presence of taboo in-laws (Po; this is the well known 'mother-in-law language' described in Dixon 1972), and a taboo on the names of the dead (D). Concerning the latter, Dixon (1980: 28) states that "in every part of Australia a person's name cannot be spoken for some time after his death". These three types of taboo are further evidenced in the five additional Australian languages listed in the addenda to the Appendix.

The taboo types in the neighbouring families show similarities with the Austronesian types, but there are also distinctive differences. Western Austronesian distinguishes itself from its Austro-Asiatic neighbours by not having the taboo on names of the dead, and by having the parents-in-law taboo. Oceanic distinguishes itself from its Papuan neighbours by having three additional kinds of taboo: the cross-sex consanguineal name taboo, the chiefly name taboo, and the use of honorific vocabulary with respected men.

While it cannot be denied that word taboo is an areal feature, any attempt to explain Austronesian word taboo in terms of areal influences will fall short. Ultimately the unique features of Austronesian word taboo are most easily explained in terms of shared inheritance from a common ancestral culture.

3.   WORD TABOO AND PROBLEMS IN COMPARATIVE AUSTRONESIAN LINGUISTICS

In Section 1 we saw that word taboo causes language change. Basically it consists of spontaneous change in vocabulary to replace tabooed words. Three recurring mechanisms of change were observed:

(1)   borrowing from a neighbouring dialect,

(2)   deliberate phonological modification of the exisiting term,

(3)   semantic innovation from within the language.

At the lexical level, these processes lead to the generation of synonyms and doublets within the language. At the phonological level, the first two processes lead to irregular sound changes. (Note that no effects at the grammatical level have been observed.) Therefore word taboo, as a cultural feature which motivates the above kinds of changes, poses a problem for conventional comparative linguistics which operates on principles of regular sound drift, independent change in languages, and the non-existence of true synonyms.

Given that at least the parents-in-law name taboo must be reconstructed for Proto-Austronesian, and that many more varieties of word taboo can be reconstructed for various subgroups in Austronesian, we would expect to see the above effects reflected in the history of the Austronesian language family. I therefore suggest that word taboo may play a role in explaining the following seven problems for comparative linguistics:

(1) Problems in classifying languages of east Indonesia and insular
Melanesia: Pawley (1975:485) describes the situation as follows:

> The languages of east Indonesia, including the western end of
> New Guinea, more diverse than those of west Indonesia and the
> Philippines, are sometimes treated as a single subgroup of
> Western Austronesian, and sometimes regarded as composed of a
> number of primary branches, each co-ordinate with Oceanic and
> with a group comprising the remaining members of Western
> Austronesian. Similarly troublesome are a number of languages
> of the north coast of New Guinea and certain regions of insular
> Melanesia.

Note that these two problem areas in classification are precisely those areas
where the greatest number of word tabooing practices occur. Besides having the
parents-in-law and hunting language taboos reconstructed for Western Austronesian,
the area of Halmahera and Geelvink Bay stands out as also having siblings-in-law
name taboos, taboos on the name of the chief, and taboos on the names of the dead.
Furthermore, three of the five languages in our sample from that area extend the
name taboos to include words even resembling the tabooed name. It is therefore
not surprising that these languages are 'more diverse' than their counterparts in
west Indonesia and the Philippines. For the other troublesome area, insular
Melanesia, we reconstructed no less than six types of word taboos.

(2) The dissimilarity of vocabulary in Oceanic Languages: Pawley (1975:489,
485) states the problem thus:

> Scholars remain puzzled by the great differences among Oceanic
> languages, especially in vocabulary items.... These languages
> share very few related words with each other and with other
> languages in the family, although in grammar they usually show
> quite strong resemblances to members of the Oceanic subgroup.

We have seen that word taboo, of which six varieties are reconstructed in Oceania,
causes frequent and spontaneous lexical change, without affecting the grammar.

(3) Reconciling retention rate constants of glottochronology with archaeo-
logical time scales: Pawley (1976:306) gives a case for the south-eastern coast
of Papua New Guinea where archaeological evidence suggests that Oceanic people
settled about 2,000 years ago, but glottochronological computations suggest over
3,000 years ago. However, where word taboo causes spontaneous lexical change,
languages are not written, and populations are small, it is not surprising that
lexical change would be faster than Swadesh's proposed constant.

(4) Explaining variation in retention rates among Austronesian languages:
Blust (1981) has documented the wide range of variation in the percentage of
basic vocabulary that various Austronesian languages have retained from Proto-
Austronesian. If the Swadesh hypothesis of a constant and universal retention
rate is true, then all Austronesian languages should preserve the same proportion
of Proto-Austronesian vocabulary, since all daughter languages are equally far
removed in time from the common ancestral language. However, the retention rates
reported by Blust range from a high of 57% to a low of 16%. In searching for an
explanation, I would suggest that the rate of vocabulary replacement is likely to
correlate with the intensity of word tabooing practices. Note that Blust's basic
conclusion that vocabulary replacement in Oceanic (where retention ranges from
38% to 16%) is much greater than in Western Malayo-Polynesian (where retention
ranges from 57% to 29%), accords with my results that word tabooing practices are
more intense in Oceanic.

(5)   Finding homelands for proto-speech communities: Dyen (1956) has proposed that the most likely dispersal centre (homeland) of a language family or subgroup is in that region where its genetically most diverse members are found. This is based on an assumption that for all the languages in a family, the rate of linguistic change will be the same. Thus the area of greatest linguistic diversity would be the area of greatest time depth. However, in (1) and (4) above, we have seen that in Austronesia, linguistic diversity may not be so much a function of time depth as of intensity of word tabooing practices. Dyen (1965), taking his proposal to its logical conclusion, suggests that the Austronesian languages have their origin in western Melanesia, in an area centred on the Bismarck Archipelago. But few scholars have accepted this hypothesis. As Bellwood (1978:32) states, "there are very strong archaeological and physical reasons for excluding Melanesia as a possible Austronesian homeland".

(6)   The problem of synonyms and doublets in reconstruction: Capell (1976: 570, 574) speaks of the problem of the high number of synonyms (including variants in form, and semantic shifts) in lists of reconstructed Proto-Oceanic and (to a lesser extent) Proto-Austronesian vocabulary. "To state the difficulty rather crudely, there seem to be enough quasi-synonyms to provide more than one proto-language!" For Capell, this fact supports his theory of multiple migrations into Oceania with prehistoric 'language mixing'. However, we have already seen in the Malaitan example, that in one particular group of word tabooing languages, synonyms must be reconstructed for 21% of the items on a basic wordlist and doublets for 7%. A large number of synonyms and doublets is a natural by-product of word tabooing. Thus we can expect them in PAN and especially POC reconstructions.

(7)   Reconstructing too many proto-phonemes: The problem of reconstructing too many proto-phonemes is exemplified by Dyen's description of Proto-Austronesian phonology (1971). Among the reconstructed proto-phonemes he lists: $*R_1$ through $*R_4$, $*S_1$ through $*S_5$, $*h_1$ through $*h_4$, and many more subscript-1 and subscript-2 proto-phonemes. These cannot really be considered reconstructions,[21] however, because no natural language could possibly have that many phonological contrasts. These 'reconstructions' do not therefore tell us what the language spoken by the Proto-Austronesians must have been like. These reconstructions are based on the Neogrammarian hypothesis that, "The sound laws admit no exceptions". Thus a new proto-phoneme is posited for each unexplained correspondence set. However, in a word tabooing language family a new maxim is required: "Sound change can be expected to occur spontaneously and irregularly in individual words." The comparativist in Austronesia must distinguish regular correspondence sets that reflect the original proto-language, from those correspondences (even though they may recur) which result from spontaneous changes caused by word taboo.

The hypothesis that word tabooing can explain many problems in comparative linguistics is not without its own problems. One problem is that although word tabooing practices may be widespread, they may not necessarily be of a nature that would promote widespread language change. For instance, a sibling-in-law taboo would affect far fewer people than a taboo on the name of a dead person, and that in turn might affect fewer people than a taboo on the name of a chief or king. Presumably taboos affecting only a few people would not be likely to cause language change, whereas those affecting a whole dialect group would. Further study will be required to correlate the nature of word tabooing with the extent of language change.

I would suggest that two factors are likely to cause even taboos on names of relations to have a greater effect on language change than we might expect: (1) the small size of speech communities and language groups in Oceania, and (2) social systems in which most everyone is related to everyone else. With regard to (1), the average population of an Oceanic language is only about 3,000 (about 300 languages with about one million speakers: Pawley 1975) and speech communities often consist of only a few households forming a hamlet. It is conceivable that changes could easily take root in such small groups.[22] With regard to (2), the taboos often extend generationally. That is, a parents-in-law taboo might extend to all affines of the first ascending generation, a siblings-in-law taboo might extend to all affines of the same generation, or a cross-sex siblings taboo might extend to all cross-sex blood relations of the same generation. With small residential communities organised along family lines, such taboos could affect whole speech communities.

Another problem is that the synonymy factor may actually work to retard rather than accelerate the rate of lexical change in some cases. This is because with synonyms available, lexical replacement is not really necessary. Rather, when a word becomes tabooed, a synonym takes its place in common usage; and then when that word becomes tabooed, the original word can return to take its place; and the cycle goes on with terms alternating between tabooed and non-tabooed status without being replaced. Further study will be required to find out to what extent tabooed forms are revived rather than being replaced.

Even if revival rather than replacement is the common rule, the power of word taboo as an explanatory factor in the seven problem areas discussed above is little affected. The effect of word taboo in generating synonyms, doublets, and spontaneous irregular sound changes is not changed. Only the rate of lexical replacement would be affected; it would be slower. But this would not remove the skewing effect in lexicostatistics simply because synonymy would still be involved. Even if words that have temporarily gone out from common use will one day come back, this does not change the fact that they are gone when the count of cognates is made. The word-tabooing situation will always give conventional lexico-statistics the appearance of greater diversity than is truly there (see examples in Section 1).

Perhaps the greatest problem with word tabooing as an explanation in comparative linguistics, and the potentially most damaging one, is the tendency that may arise to abuse it by offering it as a panacea to cure all comparative problems. Other explanations have been used in the past — migrations, substrata, pidginisation, and language mixing. There has been a disturbing tendency to put these forth lightly without good evidence when normal comparative explanations fail. I hope I am not guilty of that here. Rather, my aim is to demonstrate how word taboo can affect language change, to cite some potential explanations that it may hold, and then to exhort individual investigators to apply these explanations only after detailed study has demonstrated their validity.

Word taboo offers a fresh approach to problems in comparative Austronesian linguistics. Unlike the other four explanations listed above, it does not rely on external interference from another language, but strictly on internal cultural practices of the language group itself. However, we must be careful to apply this explanation with understanding, lest it merely become a waste basket for the inexplicable.

APPENDIX

COMPLETE DATA FOR SURVEY OF WORD TABOO DISTRIBUTION IN AUSTRONESIA

The complete data on which all the maps and results in Section 2 are based are listed in this appendix. Table 6 serves as an index into this listing (see Section 2.1). Under each language, an initial paragraph details the location of the language (including latitude and longitude where possible) and the source of information. Where information came from a questionnaire, the full name of the respondent is given followed by his or her affiliation. (Summer Institute of Linguistics is abbreviated as SIL). Native speaker respondents are identified as such.[23] Where information came from published literature, an author-year citation is given. Where there is literature that appears to be relevant but which I have not yet seen, it is cited in parentheses preceded by 'see also'.

The data regarding word taboos are presented in numbered paragraphs corresponding to the type of information as follows:

1. Names of affinal relations tabooed
2. Names of consanguineal relations tabooed
3. Name of the chief tabooed
4. Names of the dead tabooed
5. Name taboos extending to word taboo
6. Hunting language taboos
7. Polite language taboos
8. Secret language taboos
9. Other word tabooing or related practices

If there is no information regarding a category, no paragraph for that category appears. In categories 1 and 2, *from X to Y* is used to show a one-way taboo relationship where X cannot say Y's name, or *to Y* where the identity of X is implied unambiguously. *Between X and Y* is used to show a reciprocal relationship (that is, neither can say the other's name). The sources are not always explicit enough to make an interpretation possible.

The comments in paragraph 5 pertain to all the name tabooing practices described in 1 through 4. The responses in this category tell two things: if names can be formed from common words, and to what extent the name taboo extends to a word taboo. In the case of the two responses, "The common word also is tabooed" and "Words even resembling the tabooed names are tabooed", the fact that names can be formed from common words is to be understood.

In the questionnaire which I sent out, respondents were asked to judge the strength of each tabooing practice they described. Three choices were given: Strong, Dying out, or Ancient. Some respondents added a fourth category: Weak. These judgments (where available) are added in parentheses at the end of the numbered paragraph to which they pertain.

1. MADAGASCAR — Malagasy Republic. (The source gives no particular dialect.) Frazer 1911:378, 379, 401.

3. Whenever a common word forms the name or part of the name of the chief of the tribe, it becomes sacred and may no longer be used in its normal signification. There are a large number of independent chieftains, and therefore so many changes that confusion often arises.

4. After the chief dies, the words remain taboo.

5. The common word also is tabooed.

6. They don't mention the word for 'crocodile' near some rivers. Don't say the word for 'salt' within earshot of a certain spirit lest he dissolve it. Don't say words for 'lightning' or 'mud', or mention one's clothes are 'wet' if they were wetted in certain rivers.

2. MALAY — Malay Peninsula, West Malaysia. Frazer 1911:407-408, 405; Laycock 1972 (see also Evans 1917, 1923; St. John 1863).

6. Tin miners regard the ore as being under the protection and command of certain spirits and that the ore itself has its own personality and will. Thus they taboo the use of words offensive to the spirits and to the ore. The Malay fowler does not call the artifacts of his trade by common name. Fishermen do not mention the common names of birds or beasts while they are at sea. Searchers for camphor go into the forests for three or four months and during the whole of this time the use of ordinary Malay language is forbidden to them, and they have to speak a special language called by them the bassa kapor *camphor language*. Even those who stayed behind in the villages must speak it while the search party is in the forest. They use the camphor language to propitiate the spirit who presides over camphor trees.

9. St. John (1863, vol.2:289, quoted by Laycock 1972:97) describes the use of disguised language in the court of the Sultan of Brunei:

> The women delight in every practice that can deceive their lords, and they have invented a system of speaking to each other in what may be called an inverted language—in Malay, 'Bhasa Balik'. It is spoken in different ways: ordinary words have their syllables transposed, or to each syllable another one is added.... They are constantly varying it, and girls often invent a new system, only confined to their intimate acquaintances; if they suspect they are understood by others, they instantly change it.

Laycock gives a few examples (1972:70, 81, 84).

3. SEA DYAK — Sarawak, East Malaysia. Frazer 1911:339.

1. To the parents of the spouses of one's self, one's brothers, one's sisters, and one's cousins.

5. The common word also is tabooed.

4. TATANA — Sabah, East Malaysia (5.5 N, 115.5 E). Inka Pekkanen and Phyllis Dunn, SIL.

1. Between children-in-law and parents-in-law. (Dying out)

5. Names can be formed from common words, but only the name is tabooed.

6. While hunting in the jungle, the hunters may not say the names of the wild animals, neither the ones they are hunting specifically nor any others. If someone spots a game animal, he shouts, "Look! Raramu over there!", raramu being any kind of wild game. (Strong)

8. There is a ritual language which is very old. The priestesses must study it for several years, and the common people hearing it cannot understand what is being said.

9. It is taboo to give a child the name of someone else. If that person has died, giving someone their name shows that one wants to forget that the ancestor existed and to no longer appease their spirit. Unappeased spirits can cause all kinds of trouble including sickness and death.

5. LABUK KADAZAN — Sabah, East Malaysia (6 N, 117 E). Hope M. Hurlbut, SIL.

1. Between children-in-law and parents-in-law. If a person should mention his parent-in-law's name, then his abdomen would swell up and might burst, or his disposition might change from being kind and friendly to bad-tempered.

2. From children to parents and grandparents and so on. Actually, younger people are not supposed to say the name of any older person, but if pressed people will be willing to say the name of an older person as long as it is not their own relative. The government is forcing people to drop the taboo by saying that information given to the government is not taboo. As people see there is no evil consequence from breaking the taboo once, then it comes easier the second time. Also the introduction of Christianity has brought more freedom from this and other taboos. (Strong, but weakening among young people.)

3. Children are forbidden to say the names of village headmen and other chiefs, but adults are free to use them. Probably an extension of (2) above.

4. Names of people older than oneself are still taboo after they die. (Strong, but weakening among young people.)

5. The common word is also tabooed.

6. There are some words which are taboo during harvest, such as wind, bathe, rain, day. This taboo holds in some, but not all, villages. When one goes hunting and is asked "Where are you going?", the reply is "I am going to collect rattan". In the same way, if one is going fishing, the reply is "Going for a walk" or "Going for a paddle". Nor can the names of weapons, animals, fishing equipment, or fish be mentioned, lest the game hear and hide.

9. They avoid giving children the names of another person. If they did and either one died, then the family of the living person with the same name will demand the payment of a chicken from the family of the deceased, because the living person of the same name has been 'threatened' and may die also if no payment is made.

6. EASTERN CHAM — Vietnam (11.5 N, 109 E). Doris Blood, SIL; Frazer 1911:404.

2. Relatives are usually referred to by kin terms rather than names. Parents are seldom called by name but referred to as 'mother of X' or 'father of Y'. She suggests that there may have been something going on with name taboo that she was not aware of.

6. From Frazer: When the Cham are searching for the precious eagle-wood in the forest, they must employ an artificial jargon to designate most objects of everyday life.

9. Among the Cham there is a difference between men's and women's speech. This is relevant to the overall problem of multiple forms for a single meaning unit, but does not appear to be related to word tabooing. Men's speech preserves relic language features and terms that are found in the ancient Cham script and literature. Women's speech (because women are illiterate) has streamlined these forms by a natural process of language change. See Blood 1961 for a full explanation.

7. CHRU — Vietnam 11.8 N, 108.9 E). Gene Fuller, SIL.

4. There is a reticence to utter the names of the dead. Fuller reports, "A brother of a Chru friend died. He told us of it in a letter. He wrote the name of the deceased enclosed in parentheses."

5. Some names are formed from common words. Fuller did not know if the taboo would extend to the common word.

8. ROGLAI — Vietnam (12 N, 109 E). Ernest W. Lee, SIL; Frazer 1911:404 for item 6 only.

2. Personal names are avoided after people become parents. (This is not confined to relatives; it is to all people.) Parents are called by names of children; grandparents are called by names of grandchildren born of their daughters. Even husband and wife call each other by their child's name after they have had children, but by a reciprocal kinship term before having children.

5. All names must be nonsense. Furthermore, a name of either a living or dead person cannot be given to another. Lee reports, "I know one example of a child's name that had to be changed because an old woman came down from the mountains to a refugee settlement and this child had the same name as hers."

4. These two constraints on naming practices suggest a hypothesis that originally there was a taboo on the names of the dead (in that names are not re-used) and that names were originally meaningful words and these words were tabooed as well (in that the current requirement of nonsense names could have arisen in order to avoid having to change the language when names became taboo).

6. When the 'Orang-Glai' (E. Lee confirms identification as Roglai) are searching for the precious eagle-wood in the forest, they must employ an artificial jargon to designate most objects of everyday life.

9. Different forms of phonologically modified play language are used for different characters in story telling. In 'corpse talk' the final vowel (or diphthong) of one word is swapped with an adjacent word. In 'tiger talk' vowels are nasalised. In 'turtle talk' the final vowel (or diphthong) is dropped and replaced by -èt. In 'buzzard talk' all non-final syllables are replaced by ri- and the vowel of the final syllable is nasalised.

9. YAMI — Botel Tobago Island, Formosa (45 miles due E. of south tip of Formosa). The people originate from Batanese, N. Philippines, rather than from the Formosan mainland. Kano and Segawa 1956:13.

4. It is taboo to refer to the name of the dead in the presence of its consanguineal kin, for by doing so the spirit of the dead might be invoked into visiting them and exposing them to the same peril (i.e. death).

10. BOLINAO (SAMBAL) — Luzon, Philippines (16.3 N, 119.8 E). Gary Persons, SIL. All responses negative.

5. Some names are formed from common words.

11. KANKANAEY — Luzon, Philippines (16.8 N, 120.7 E). Larry Allen, SIL.

    5. Some names are formed from common words.

    9. Poetic language — There are special words used in ritual songs, especially for rhyming purposes. For example, ipogaw *person* has the synonyms litagwá and kityágo which are used only in certain rhyming songs. It would not be taboo to use these terms elsewhere; it would only be strange or inappropriate.

       Play languages — There are quite a few play languages used by young people for entertainment and to conceal the nature of a conversation from outsiders. Some modifications used: (1) Insert pV_x after every V_x, (2) delete everything but first syllable of root, reduplicate that syllable, then suffix -ninit (which is a nonsense element), or (3) delete the last syllable of the main word of a short sentence and then add -s to that word.

12. EASTERN BONTOC —Luzon, Philippines (17 N, 121 E). David and Joan Ohlson, SIL. All responses negative.

    5. Names are formed from common words.

13. IFUGAO: AMGANAD — Luzon, Philippines (17 N, 121 E). Anne West, SIL.

    2. Names are not taboo. However, it is not considered respectful to use a relative's name, but rather one refers to him by a kinship term, and only mentions his name when asked for it.

    5. Some names are formed from common words.

    9. There is a taboo (but not a strict one) against using the term 'my spouse'. Instead one must say 'my companion' or 'that one'.

14. CHAVACANO — W. Mindanao, Philippines (7 N, 122 E). This language is a Spanish creole that has grown out of an originally Austronesian area (thus AN culture). Audrey Mayer, SIL.

    2. Mayer reports:

> Relatives are often referred to by kinship terms rather than by name, but as far as we have been able to tell this is attributed to 'our custom' rather than to taboo. It could probably be called a courtesy custom. It is not strictly followed. Perhaps it originated in a long lost taboo system that is no longer even recognised by the speakers as such.

Since she has defined the practice in terms of courtesy rather than avoidance, I have not counted it in Section 2.

    5. Names are not formed from common words.

15. CENTRAL SINAMA — Sulu Archipelago, Philippines (5.5 N, 121 E). Kemp Pallesen, SIL.

    1. Between parents-in-law and children-in-law. To a spouse's siblings and their spouses. (Strong)

    2. Between grandparents and grandchildren, and between uncles-aunts and nieces-nephews. (Strong) Between parents and children. (Weak)

4. All those in first and second ascending generation whose names were tabooed in life, are also tabooed when dead. (Strong)

5. Names can be formed from common words, but only name is tabooed.

16. ACHINESE — NW Sumatra, Indonesia. Frazer 1911:409.

6. Fishermen employ a special vocabulary when at sea. Sumatran gold miners observe naming taboos similar to Malay tin miners (see number 2).

17. NIAS — Nias Island, Indonesia (1 N, 97.5 E). Frazer 1911:410.

6. During hunting season, they may not call the 'eye', 'hammer', 'stones', and 'sun' by their true names. During rice harvest, reapers must speak of everything by names different from those in common use.

18. KARO-BATAK — Central Sumatra, Indonesia. Frazer 1911:338, 405.

1. To parents-in-law.

2. To parents, uncles, aunts, grandparents, brothers and sisters.

6. Never say the word 'tiger' in the forest, but always some euphemistic phrase in order to propitiate the beast.

19. BATAK — Central Sumatra, Indonesia. Frazer 1911:338, 405.

1. From a man to his wife or children-in-law. From a woman to her son-in-law.

2. They have an aversion to saying the names of self, parents, grandparents, and elder blood relatives.

6. When they go out in search of camphor, they must abandon the speech of daily life as soon as they reach the camphor forest.

20. SUNDANESE — West Java, Indonesia. Frazer 1911:341, 415. (Frazer cites Sunda; I have ascribed it to Sundanese.)

2. To father and mother.

6. It is taboo to call certain animals by their standard language designation, e.g. goat, tiger, wild boar, mouse. Must use a circumlocution instead.

7. Sundanese has three status styles: informal, deferential, and a middle style (*Encyclopaedia Britannica,* 1975, *Micropaedia* 9:672).

21. JAVANESE — Central and Eastern Java, Indonesia. For item 6, Frazer 1911:411; for item 7, John U. Wolff, Cornell University; for item 9, Laycock 1972:77-78.

6. They avoid using certain common words at evening or night. For instance, 'snake' is called 'tree root', a 'venemous centipede' is called 'red ant', and 'oil' is called 'water'.

7. Wolff explains the status styles in Javanese as follows:

> Javanese has special honorific vocabulary which refers to actions done by or done toward persons of a certain rank. Thus to my father I would never 'give', I would 'offer';

and he in turn would not just 'give' to me, but 'grant'.
I might 'eat' but someone like my father would 'dine'.
Honorifics are used to refer to any person considered to
be of high status, but one never uses them of oneself.
Their proper use is a matter of using good manners, but
by no means is it something as rigidly enforced as a taboo
would be.

In addition to honorifics, Javanese also has speech
levels — that is, a set of forms (about 1000 in number)
which one uses when speaking to persons of a certain class
or people one is not intimate with. The use of the high
level is determined by factors similar to the factors which
lead to the choice of *tu* or *usted* in Spanish, *du* or *Sie* in
German, and so forth.

9. Laycock documents a play-language in which the first syllable of poly-
syllabic words is dropped.

22. DYAK — West Borneo, Indonesia (specifically identified as Dyaks of Landak
and Tajan). Frazer 1911:340.

2. To parents and grandparents.

23. BOLANG MONGONDO — West Sulawesi, Indonesia. Frazer 1911:341.

1. To parents-in-law

2. To parents, aunts, and uncles.

24. ALFOORS OF POSO — Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. Frazer 1911:340, 411-412.

1. To parents-in-law. This is the strictest taboo.

2. To father, mother, grandparents, and other near relatives.

5. The common word also is tabooed. "It is the common practice ... to
replace the forbidden word by a kindred word ... borrowed from another dialect."

6. Forbidden to speak the ordinary language when at work in the harvest
field. They also substitute common words in the forest, so as not to offend the
spirits there.

25. ALFOORS OF MINAHASSA — Northern Sulawesi, Indonesia. Frazer 1911:341.

1. To parents-in-law. This is the strongest taboo.

2. To father, mother, grandparents, and other near relatives.

5. Words even resembling the tabooed name are also tabooed.

26. ALFOORS OF HALMAHERA — Halmahera, Indonesia. Frazer 1911:341.

1. To father-in-law.

27. TOBARU — Halmahera, N Moluccas, Indonesia. Roriwo Karetji, native speaker.

    1. Between children-in-law and parents-in-law. To one's spouse's siblings. Between the parents of spouses. If a parent-in-law accidentally mentions the name of a child-in-law, he will receive a light punishment or fine. But if the child-in-law mentions the name of his parents-in-law, or a word similar to their names, he will be heavily punished. (Strong)

    5. Words even resembling the name are tabooed.

28. NUFOORS — Numfor Island, Irian Jaya, Indonesia. (Numfor is my identification of Frazer's Nufoor.) Frazer 1911:342.

    1. Persons related by marriage are forbidden to mention each other's name.

    5. Even words resembling the name are tabooed.

29. SERUI — Yapen Island, Irian Jaya, Indonesia. Sumar Sinery, native speaker.

    1. To parents-in-law. Must use word for 'you' instead. (Strong)

    3. Names of person of high standing are tabooed. (This taboo does not carry over to common words.) (Dying out)

    4. The names of all dead are tabooed. "Educated people are influencing the village away from this practice." (Dying out)

    5. Words even resembling the name are tabooed.

    9. If friends are in the jungle or hunting together, they may not call out each other's names. (Strong)

30. BIAK — Biak Island, Irian Jaya, Indonesia 1 S, 136 E). Neltji Mampioper, native speaker.

    1. Between parents-in-law and children-in-law. (Dying out)

    3. Names of persons of high standing are tabooed. (Dying out)

    4. The names of all dead are tabooed for normal use, because they are used in worshipping statues or other sacred things for the purpose of obtaining good spirits or else to curse other people. (Dying out)

    5. The common word also is tabooed.

    6. One does not say he is going to hunt cuscus, but rather that he is going to get rattan. One does not say that he is going fishing but rather that he is going to the sea. (Strong)

31. KAIRIRU — Kairiru Island, Papua New Guinea (3.5 S, 143.5 E). Richard Wivell, SIL.

    1. To parents-in-law and to brothers-in-law. (Strong)

    5. Some names are formed from common words. He did not know if the taboo extends to the common word.

32. JABEM — Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea (6.6 S, 147.8 E). Frazer 1911: 342, 354.

   1. Parents-in-law may neither be touched or named.

   4. They do not mention the names of the dead.

   5. The common word also is tabooed.

33. PATEP — Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea (6.9 S, 146.6 E). A dialect of Mumeng. Linda Lauck, SIL.

   1. Between parents-in-law and children-in-law. To the siblings-in-law of oneself, one's cousins, or of other close relatives. (Weak)

   5. The common word also is taboo.

34. BUANG — Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea (6.9 S, 146.9 E). Bruce Hooley, SIL; Hooley 1972: 502-505.

   1. Names of all in-law relations tabooed, especially parents-in-law and brothers-in-law. It is a great shame to say the names of one's in-laws, and a lapse in this requires that the offender withdraw from village activities until his mistake is forgotten. Usually a present must be given to the offended party as well. (Strong)

   5. The common word is tabooed as well. Hooley (1972) documents how the replacement forms are obtained. (See discussion in Section 1.3 above.) In a personal communication, Hooley documents three cases of common words which have recently fallen out of use (while their use as names remains); these changes he ascribes to the tabooing process.

35. NAKANAI — Central north coast of New Britain, Papua New Guinea (5.5 S, 151 E). Raymond Johnston, SIL; Johnston 1980: 11.

   1. Between a man and his parents-in-law. From a woman to her parents-in-law. From a person to any other relatives of the person he has married. Some younger people will say the name of in-laws in the same generation. (Strong)

   2. In general, names are avoided either in reference or address as a means of showing esteem. It is unthinkable for a young person to address an older person by name, and unbearable that someone should so address their in-laws. The utmost deference is shown by third person reference in face-to-face conversation. Between cross-consanguineals there are numerous respect and mutual obligation constraints, but they do not include name taboos. (Strong)

   3. It is taboo to say the name of a person of high standing to his face.

   4. Names of the dead are tabooed, but just for a few weeks after the death.

   5. The common word also is tabooed.

   6. In fishing, one does not readily announce the name of the reef or one's intentions, for fear of spiritual interference. Johnston thought that the same kind of deceptive taboo applies to hunting, but was not certain at the time of writing.

   8. There are a few hidden expressions amounting to some kind of limited argot for special occasions when secrecy is needed from (usually) tribal outsiders.

8. The older men use an alternative vocabulary in certain situations, apparently related to magic.

9. People do not want to say their own names. (Strong)

45. MISIMA — Misima Island, Papua New Guinea (10.6 S, 152.8 E). Bill and Sandra Callister, SIL.

1. To all in-laws, but especially strong to parents-in-law. There is also a respectful avoidance of using one's spouse's name. (Strong)

2. There is a respectful avoidance of using the names of one's parents, grandparents, or mother's brother. There is not a penalty for saying the names of tabooed relatives, except social disapproval. (Strong)

3. In the past, the names of respected men, who had much wealth (mainly in the form of pigs) and who were generous and hospitable, were often tabooed. Nowadays, these men do not really exist. (Ancient)

4. People on Misima have several names, at least three, but one of these is their 'real' name, and this name is strictly tabooed by everyone in an area when they die (essentially, in their home village which may consist of 200-500 people). The penalty for breaking the taboo is to pay valuables to the offended relatives. Close relatives in the same clan are allowed to say the name of the deceased, but seldom do. When a person dies, the names of his namesakes must be changed. (Strong)

5. Words even resembling the tabooed name are also tabooed. In story telling, if one's in-law's name sounds like the name of an island (for instance), one cannot name the island in the story. Rather one will refer to it in a roundabout way and then stop to check that the listeners understand which island is meant before continuing. As another example, Callisters' report that one of their acquaintances has an in-law with a name that sounds like the Dobu word for *big* sinebwana. Whenever he sings Dobu songs with others, he must stop singing whenever he reaches this word, leave it out, and start up again on the following word. Because of the taboos on names of the dead, visitors from other villages must be careful to learn and avoid the tabooed words and names of their hosts. Synonyms are very common; Callisters report that there are five words for 'fire' in common use in the village where they live.

46. ALU — Shortland Islands, Solomon Islands. Stephen Sukina, native speaker.

1. Between sons-in-law and parents-in-law. (Dying out)

3. A chief and his wife are not called by their names, but by a special term. (Dying out)

4. The names of some dead are tabooed (he did not specify who). (Dying out)

5. The common word also is tabooed. Sukina reports, "All of these practices will soon die out because of Christianity and because young people do not now accept and practice them."

7. If a man is with his sister, sibling-in-law, father-in-law, or son-in-law, or if a woman is with her brother or sibling-in-law, then he/she must be careful of his/her speech. For instance, one cannot ask "What part of your body?", but must ask "Where?".

47. KIA — NW Santa Isabel, Solomon Islands.   David Bosma, SIL.

1. Cannot name one's mother-in-law, nor joke in front of in-laws in general.

2. Between a man and his sister; she must be referred to by the names of her children (e.g. John's mother).

3. May not address chief by name, but only by title.

5. Some names are formed from common words, but only the name is tabooed.

7. When speaking or referring to a big man, special lexical items are used in place of common terms for many body parts and bodily actions.   For instance, vagitau replaces mahai *eat*, mego replaces epu *to sleep*, saoro replaces ngengene *to talk*, ngurehe replaces nauele *to cry*, paete replaces manga *mouth*, nahali replaces hiba *eye*, and so on.

48. MARINGE — Santa Isabel, Solomon Islands.   David Bosma, SIL.

1. Between children-in-law and parents-in-law; between siblings-in-law. Between a man and his mother-in-law and between siblings-in-law of opposite sexes there are additional taboos against visual contact, proximal contact, and even conversing in certain circumstances.   If someone should break the taboo and mention the names of in-laws, then the in-laws will demand a customary payment called pholoru which involves giving a feast in which lots of presents are given to them.

3. Cannot address chief by name, only by title.

5. Some names are formed from common words, but only the name is tabooed.

7. With reference to big men, *to eat* is ima rather than the common term ghamu.

49. GHARI — West Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands.   Fr. Kerry Prendeville, S.M.

2. Between a man and his sisters (includes all females of same generation in his lineage), and vice versa.   Besides a name taboo, there is avoidance of physical contact, proximal contact, or visual contact.   Both the traditional name and the Christian name are taboo.   Use of the kinship term, vavine, is also forbidden in the sister's presence.   They do not even like to see this word printed in written literature.

5. Names are formed from common words, but only use of the name is tabooed.

6. When fishing for bonito or flying fish, they do not utter the names of their prey.

9. They avoid the names of legendary ancestral spirits, and place names associated with ancestral shrines.

50. BIRAO — East Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands.   Hogbin 1937:68-69, 1969:17-18.

1. One does not address relatives-by-marriage by either name or kinship term.

2. One does not address brothers, sisters, mother's brothers, or sister's sons by either name or kinship term.   There are many other avoidance taboos between a brother and sister.   For parents, kinship terms but not name are appropriate.

5. The common word also is tabooed.   A person addressing a tabooed relative has recourse to the dual form of the pronoun.

51. RENNELLESE — Rennell Island, Solomon Islands (12 S, 160 E).   Nico Daams, SIL.

  1. Between a man and his sister's husband (or wife's brother), and between a woman and her brother's wife (or husband's sister), there is a relationship of restraint marked by avoidance of personal names and refrain from talking of sexual matters.   (Dying out)

  2. Between a brother and sister there was a relationship of stringent avoidance, including a name taboo as well as taboos against conversing and proximal contact.   When the mission came, they told the people that this was a bad custom.   Today only the name taboo is observed among older people. (Dying out)

  4. People will not use the name of a deceased person for a certain time after a person has died.   The duration depends on the 'love' one has for the deceased. As a substitute, people use a newly coined honorific name.   (Strong)

  5. Some names are formed from common words, but only the name is tabooed. 1 and 2 apply only to traditional names, while 4 applies to both traditional and European names.

52. TO'ABAITA — Northern Malaita Island, Solomon Islands (8.4 S, 160.6 E). Gary Simons, SIL.

  4. The names of dead ancestors whose spirits have become sacred are tabooed. The practice is basically as described for Kwaio by Keesing and Fifi'i (1969). (Dying out among Christians)

  5. The common word is also tabooed.

  7. One never speaks about the mouth parts (mouth, tongue, teeth, lips, neck) of a respected man or a stranger.   For some words of eating and some foods, there are honorific forms which must be used when addressing or referring to respected men or strangers.   There is no penalty for a breach of this custom, except public shame.   (See footnote 9 for honorific forms.)   (Strong)

  9. There are separate plural pronouns used in reference to women.

53. 'ARE'ARE — Southern Malaita Island, Solomon Islands,   Philip Neri, native speaker.

  1. A man to his sister-in-law; a woman to her brother-in-law.   (Weak)

  2. Between a brother and sister.   (Weak)

  3. A chief is called by his title, araha, never by his name.   (Strong)

  4. The names of ancestral spirits are tabooed in all but ritual uses.   Names of all dead are taboo in joking contexts.   (Weak)

  5. The common word is also tabooed.   The name tabooing practices are dying out because of Christianity and other European influence.

54. ULAWA — Ulawa Island, Solomon Islands. (9.8 S, 161.9 E).   Richard Teona, native speaker.

  7. One does not invite someone to 'eat', but rather to 'hold food'.

55. AROSI — West San Cristobal, Solomon Islands. Silas Dodomwane, native speaker.

    1. Between children-in-law and parents-in-law. (Dying)

    3. The name of the chief was once tabooed. (Ancient)

    5. Names can be formed from common words, but only the name is tabooed.

56. BAURO — Central San Cristobal, Solomon Islands. Stephen Musi, native speaker; Fox 1919:143 (for item 2 only).

    1. Between children-in-law and parents-in-law. (Strong)

    2. Between brother and sister. (Strong) This is a strict avoidance relationship which besides the name taboo includes taboos against physical contact, proximal contact, joking, or conversing. This avoidance relation extends to cross-cousins in some parts of Bauro. Also, a boy does not say the name of his older brother or joke in his presence.

    3. Name of chief was once tabooed. (Ancient)

    5. Names can be formed from common words, but only the name is tabooed.

57. KAHUA — Eastern San Cristobal, Solomon Islands. Michael Hanega, native speaker.

    1. Between son-in-law and parents-in-law. Between siblings-in-law. (Strong)

    3. Name of chief was once tabooed. (Ancient) Currently, people have a great respect for big men and have special words for calling them. (Weak)

    4. It was once taboo to mention the name of a dead chief. (Ancient)

    5. The common word also is tabooed.

    6. You can never ask anyone who is going hunting, "Where are you going? Hunting?". Instead you must say, "Are you going to climb betelnut?". (Strong)

    7. There is a special way of talking to big men. One cannot say "your eye!" or "your mouth!" or "your head!" as an exclamation. They can be used in normal speaking, except that in a gathering with big men one would avoid them altogether. (Strong)

    9. A person does not say his own name, except when questioned about it.

58. OWA — Santa Ana Island, Solomon Islands (11 S, 162.4 E). Martin Mafuara, native speaker.

    1. Between son-in-law and parents-in-law. If the taboo is broken there is shame and compensation must be paid. (Strong)

    3. Name of chief was once tabooed. (Ancient)

    5. Words even resembling the name are tabooed. For instance, Mafuara means *stranger*. Any name or word beginning with ma is also taboo if one's taboo relative is named Mafuara, words such as mafe *flower*, mawa *hard*, and so on.

    Mafuara tells an amusing story along these lines: One day someone from the village was reading the Scripture lesson at the evening church service. The lesson was from one of the epistles of St. Peter; however, the man's father-in-law happened to be named Peter. He announced the lesson like this: "The lesson is from the first letter written by my father-in-law, beginning at ..."

6. When someone is preparing gear for hunting or fishing it· is taboo to ask him what he is doing or where he is going. Also it is taboo to ask these questions while he is out doing the hunting or fishing. (Strong)

7. As for Kahua, number 57.

9. When a couple is engaged, they avoid using each other's names. Once they are married there is no problem.

59. AIWO — Reef Islands, Solomon Islands (10.3 S, 166.2 E). Martin Moea, native speaker; Davenport 1964:184-187.

1. Between a man and his mother-in-law (and her sisters) and father-in-law. Between siblings-in-law. The plural is used to talk about the former. A joking taboo holds for all these relations. Between spouses. With the mother-in-law, there is a strict mutual avoidance including a taboo against eye contact and conversing. If either fails to observe this avoidance, he or she must publicly destroy some personal property. The mother-in-law taboo is still strong; the other are weakening.

2. Between a person and mother's brother, father's sister, or father's sister's husband. Avoidance of joking, loud talking, and arguing as well.

5. The common word also is tabooed.

60. SANTA CRUZ — Santa Cruz Island, Solomon Islands (10.8 S, 166 E). Gary Simons, SIL; W. O'Ferrall 1904:223ff. (See section 1.1 above)

1. Between son-in-law and parents-in-law. Between men who have married sisters. Between son-in-law and mother-in-law the taboo is particularly strict; they may not even talk to each other or look at each other.

4. The name remains tabooed after the in-law dies.

5. The common word also is tabooed.

61. ABA — Utupua Island, Solomon Islands (11.4 S, 166.5 E). Patterson Bagira, native speaker.

1. Between a man and his parents-in-law. Between siblings-in-law. There is also a joking taboo for these relationships. Between a man and his mother-in-law there must be a strict mutual avoidance relationship including taboos against eye contact and conversing as well. The mother-in-law taboo is strong; the others are weakening.

5. The common word also is tabooed.

62. BANKS ISLANDS — Banks Islands, Vanuatu (14 S, 167.4 E). Codrington 1891:43-44.

1. Between man and mother-in-law. From child to father-in-law. Between a man and his wife's brother. Between persons whose children have married each other. A son- and mother-in-law will not even come near each other.

5. The common word is tabooed as well. To take care of this words of similar meaning are substituted, thus 'shed' for 'house', 'cutter' for 'knife', 'shooter' for 'bow'. Also, "there is a stock of words kept in use for this very purpose, to use instead of the common words".

63. MOTLAV — Saddle Island, Banks Islands, Vanuatu (13.6 S, 167.7 E).
Baldwin Jacobson Lonsdale, native speaker.

1. Between children-in-law and parents-in-law. Between siblings-in-law,
especially brothers-in-law. Between persons whose children have married each
other, especially between parents of the same sex. The word yohe, a term of deep
respect, is used instead of the name in addressing all of the above. The taboo
between children-in-law and parents-in-law can cause a spouse's name to become
taboo. For instance, if a girl marries a boy with the same name as her father,
the girl's mother can no longer use the name of her own husband. (Strong)

4. The names of all dead are tabooed. (Strong)

5. The common word is also tabooed.

6. When a group goes hunting or fishing, there is no word taboo for those in
the group. However, it is taboo for those back in the village to mention the
names of those who are away hunting or fishing (even as a common word), lest it
cause that person to miss when shooting.

8. Men have special forms of delivering speech to their own sex. Chiefs
especially use special forms of speech if they need to make special announcements
to men, where women and girls are forbidden to be present or to hear. Women,
likewise, have special forms of delivering speech particularly to their own sex
which men and boys are forbidden to hear.

9. There is a name taboo between very close friends of the same sex
(extending to the common word). They use the respect form yohe instead. (Strong)

There is a playful use of language by reversing words. For example, a mother
might call a child, van me *come here*. If one wanted to make fun of her, the order
would be reversed, me van. (Very common)

64. AOBA — NE Aoba Island, Vanuatu. (15.4 S, 168 E). Charles Remy, native speaker.

1. Man to parents-in-law. (Strong)

2. From a man to his sister. (Strong) From a man to his mother. (Dying out)

3. Line members refer to their chief by title, not by name. (Strong)

5. Names can be formed from common words, but only the name is tabooed.

65. WEST OMBA — W Aoba Island, Vanuatu (15.4 S, 167.7 E). Formerly called
Duindui language. Dorothy Dewar, Apostolic Church.

1. Between son-in-law and parents-in-law. From daughter-in-law to parents-
in-law. Between sisters-in-law. (Strong)

2. Between adolescents and adults of opposite sexes who are related. (Strong)

3. The local names (but not European names) of chiefs are tabooed. With
Christianity, names of pastors have become taboo as well. (Strong)

5. Names are formed from common words, but only the name is tabooed. For the
parents-in-law/children-in-law taboos, both local and Christian names are tabooed.
For other relationships only the local name is.

66. RAGA — Northern Pentecost Island, Vanuatu (15.5 S, 168.1 E). Michael Taboa, native speaker.

1. Between a sister-in-law and a brother-in-law. (Dying out)

2. Previously there was avoidance between brother and sister but he does not know if it included a name taboo. (Ancient)

5. Some names are formed from common words, but only the name is tabooed.

6. When a person is going hunting or fishing, if he is met by someone and that person asks him where he is going, it is taboo to say exactly where he is going. If he did, he would not catch anything. Therefore he answers, "Going walk about".

9. Common questions such as "Where are you going?", "What are you doing?", and "What is that?" are forbidden to be asked in a strange place. Especially in places where it is believed that spirits are living. If one does, the result would be that he would fall ill.

Play language — He recalls when young hearing older boys use a form of play language in which they pronounced all the words backwards. Not common.

67. BIG NAMBAS — NW Malekula Island, Vanuatu (16 S, 167.4 E). Greg and Helen Fox, Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia; H. Fox, in press.

1. Between a daughter-in-law and a father-in-law. Between a man and the wife of his younger brother or cousin. In addition to the name taboo, a woman must never look at, speak with, or be seen by her taboo relatives.

3. The name of the chief of a clan or village is taboo.

4. Every dead person's name is taboo for a period of one generation, then it can be reused and the common word again spoken. (Strong)

5. Words even resembling the name are tabooed. Taboos on similar sounding words are dying out however. (Taboos on name and common word still strong.)

6. As for Raga, number 66.

7. Parts of the body and intimate possessions of any important men are taboo for a common person to speak of, especially women. A woman must not name the intimate parts or possessions of her son either. (Dying out)

8. Men only can know or speak the technical terms for circumcision rites. Women only can know or speak the technical terms for the tooth avulsion ceremony after marriage performed on women by women. The latter is no longer practised.

9. It is taboo to speak one's own name.

68. FILA — Efate Island, Vanuatu (17.7 S, 168.2 E). Helen Fox, Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia.

All responses negative.

69. BELEP — Belep Island, New Caledonia (19.7 S, 163.7 E). Frazer 1911:344.

2. Between a sister and a brother. Also applies between cousins of opposite sex.

70. TAVEUNI — Taveuni Island, Fiji (17 S, 180 E). Michael Cili, S.M., native speaker.

1. Between parents-in-law and children-in-law.

2. To parents, grandparents, father's brothers, mother's brothers, father's sisters and cross cousins. The mother's brothers and father's sisters are especially taboo.

3. A chief is never referred to by name, only by title.

4. The name of a dead chief is tabooed. There may have been an ancient practice of widespread tabooing of names of the dead.

5. The common word is also tabooed.

71. MAORI — New Zealand. Frazer 1911:381; Laycock 1972:70, 71, 74.

3. There was a prohibition on uttering the names of chiefs or of common words resembling them. "This taboo naturally produced a plentiful crop of synonyms in the Maori language, and travellers newly arrived in the country were sometimes puzzled at finding the same things called by quite different names in neighbouring tribes."

5. Even words resembling the name were tabooed.

9. Laycock cites examples of play-languages based on systematic insertion of nonsense syllables after every syllable of an utterance.

72. SAMOAN — Samoa (14 S, 172 W). Brown 1910:280, 382, 380-381, 250; Laycock 1972:81.

3. A word had to be changed if it was in a sacred chief's name. He also documents a case where words corresponding to the names of two village gods were changed.

5. The common word also is tabooed.

6. There were words which could not be used by the bushmen when hunting or by the fishermen when going out to fish for bonito or shark. Other words were used for the ordinary names of the articles taken by them on board.

7. Polite language was used extensively. "The underlying principle in the use of polite language is that it must be used to chiefs and visitors, but they must never use the polite terms in speaking of themselves or of anything belonging to them." Brown gives a whole page of examples (p.381). In general the ordinary forms are common Oceanic roots and the polite forms are inventions. Doves were addressed in polite language as they were thought to be the representatives of some god.

9. Lasch (1907, cited by Laycock 1972:81) mentions a play language called ganana liliu *reversed language*, but gives no examples.

73. TAHITIAN — Tahiti, French Polynesia. Frazer 1911:381-382. (See also Vernier 1948; Stokes 1955).

    3. When a king comes to the throne, any words in the language that resemble his name in sound must be changed for others.

> On the accession of King Otoo which happened before Vancouver's visit to Tahiti, the proper names of all the chiefs were changed, as well as forty or fifty of the commonest words in the language. ... When a certain king named Tu came to the throne, the word tu which means *to stand* was changed to tia, fetu *a star* became fetia, tui *to strike* became tiai, and so on.

However, these changes were temporary; on the death of the king the old words revived.

    5. Even words resembling the name were tabooed.

74. PONAPE — Paliker district, Ponape, Caroline Islands. Frazer 1911:362.

    4. Names of the dead are tabooed.

    5. The common word is tabooed as well.

75. YAPESE — Yap Island, Caroline Islands. Sherwood Lingenfelter, SUNY Brockport. (See also Defngin 1958, Kirkpatrick 1973.)

    1-2. Names are not taboo, but all kinship terms are taboo as terms of address. They are spoken as such only as a curse. Children use Spanish niña, papa to address parents, or their personal names, but never the Yapese terms tamag *my father* or tinag *my mother*. Personal names are the standard form for addressing others. (Strong)

    4. The names of all immediate kin who have died are taboo. The person whom one could never call by the kin term during his life, is only referred to by the kin term and never by name after he dies. One may speak the names of other people's dead relatives, but not one's own. If this taboo is broken, one cannot eat fish for three or more days.

    5. Names can be formed from common words, but he did not know whether the common word was tabooed as well.

NON-AUSTRONESIAN LANGUAGES

A. NICOBAR ISLANDS — Nicobar Islands, India. Austro-Asiatic. Frazer 1911:362.

    4. Names of the dead are tabooed.

    5. The common word is tabooed as well.

B. CHRAU — Vietnam (11 N, 107.5 E). Austro-Asiatic. David Thomas, SIL. (See also Thomas 1972).

2. To parents. When they have to fill out government forms, they like to have someone along to say the parents' names for them.

5. The common word is tabooed as well.

C. KATU — Vietnam (15.5 N, 107.5 E). Austro-Asiatic. Nancy Costello, SIL.

1-2. The names of all relatives are tabooed.

4. The names of all dead are tabooed.

5. The common word is tabooed as well. A word which rhymes with the common word is used when a common word becomes taboo. In this way, the language gradually changes.

D. KWERBA — Irian Jaya, Indonesia (2.2 S, 138.4 E). Papuan. James DeVries, SIL.

1. Between children-in-law and parents-in-law. Between an individual and his/her spouse's older siblings. (Strong)

4. The names of all dead are taboo, but this is practised only for a limited time after which the name is given to someone else. (Strong)

5. The common word is also tabooed. The taboos are strictly practised with the 'earth names' (indigenous names). However, they are not practised with Christian (Indonesian) names. Breaking the taboo results in a feeling of shame.

E. MUYU — Irian Jaya, Indonesia (8.5 S, 140.5 E). Papuan. Marcell Imco and Thomas Keramtop, native speakers.

1. Between a son-in-law and his mother-in-law. Between siblings-in-law. Between a person and his/her mother's brother's wife. (Strong)

3. Names of high standing leaders are tabooed. (Dying out)

4. Names of all dead are tabooed. (Strong)

5. Names are not formed from common words.

9. Names of the following are tabooed: characters in myths, sacred places, and sacred animals connected with myths and beliefs.

F. ALAMBLAK — East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea (3.5 S, 143 E). Papuan. Les Bruce, SIL. (See also Bruce 1977).

1. Between children-in-law and parents-in-law. Between siblings-in-law. (Strong)

5. The common word is tabooed as well.

6. Names for fish and the generic term 'fish' are taboo during certain important fishing expeditions during certain times of the year. The word 'sago, food' is substituted. (Strong)

9. A friend or relative who performs a kind or important duty for someone bears a special relationship to that person, who will henceforth refrain from saying his name and refer to him by a term which is related to the function that

was performed. For example, Titar (from tita *carry on shoulders*) derives from an
instance where a person carried his young friend for a long distance through the
swamp when he was sick. (Strong)

G. KEWA — Southern Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea. Papuan. Karl Franklin, SIL. References to his publications are given below at points where they are relevant.

1. Between a man and his parents-in-law, wife's brothers, wife's sisters,
wife's sisters' husbands, wife's sisters' children, and son-in-law. Between a
woman and her father-in-law. (1967:79; 1968:27ff; 1972:68; 1977:377) (Strong)

4. When a person dies, his name is considered taboo because the ghost is
malevolent. To mention a dead man's name is to call the attention of the ghost
to the speaker's presence (1972:68). (Strong)

5. The common word is also tabooed.

8. Cult argots have developed around rituals that involve cures in the houses
of specific deities or spirits. The words for common objects which are important
to cult activities are tabooed for the whole community (1972:68-69, 1975).
Franklin (personal communication) describes two processes by which this has been
done. In East Kewa, cult adherents tabooed old words for use by cult outsiders,
forcing the community to adopt dialectal (or sometimes Pidgin) replacements. In
West Kewa, the cult adherents coined new words for tabooed objects which the
community at large were not supposed to know or utter. Franklin reports that when
he would inadvertently break these word taboos, people would spit on the ground
to express their disgust. (Dying out)

Another form of secret language is a ritual pandanus language (1972). The
area in which pandanus grows in abundance is inhabited by wild dogs and spirits
and has certain magical qualities. In order to control these magical properties
and dangerous beings, the Kewa use a special language while harvesting the
pandanus. It is built on standard Kewa, but with a vocabulary and grammar
restricted and regularised. (Dying out)

H. OROKAIVA — Northern Province, Papua New Guinea (9 S, 148.4 E). Papuan. Robert Larsen, SIL; Larsen 1975:6.

1. To all in-laws.

4. The names of all dead in-laws are tabooed.

5. The common word is also tabooed. Because of this, many alternative words
are available, and words become clan-specific. For instance, the two terms 'water'
and 'mother' have five different alternative words. People are beginning to rely
more on Christian names which are not taboo.

I. BUIN — South Bougainville, Papua New Guinea (6.7 S, 155.7 E). Papuan. Margie Griffin, SIL. Laycock 1969 (for items 6 and 9).

2. Between a man and his father's sister, because the man will marry her
daughter. Other relationships are considered 'taboo', but this one is unique in
tabooing the name and in a number of other restrictions. (Dying out)

4. The name of anyone who has died is taboo for everyone for a week or two
during mourning. Very close relatives may avoid the name for a year or so. However,
if the one who died is a 'taboo relative', the name remains taboo for ever. (Dying out)

5. The common word is tabooed as well. Poetic forms of names (see 9 below) are also taboo for the aunt/nephew relationship. In former days, the people lived in small hamlets. Children grew up interacting with a limited number of other children and the adults were able to enforce the taboos. Now the people have moved together into large villages. Children play in large groups together in villages and at schools with virtually no concern for the former taboos. There is no way adults could enforce the taboos if they wanted to.

6. When men go hunting or fishing, they used to use substitute words for certain important items like 'sun', 'water', and the name of the things being hunted or fished for. This was to keep the spirits from knowing what they were doing and spoiling their luck.

9. Laycock describes three forms of modified language: poetic language (in which the first two or last two syllables of a word or name are extracted and an arbitrary affix added), adolescent play language (in which the syllables of polysyllabic words are rearranged), and a 'dog language' used in story telling (in which stops are omitted between like vowels and a suffix added).

J. YELE — Rossel Island, Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea (11 S, 154.1 E). Papuan.   Jim Henderson, SIL.

1. Between a man and his wife's sisters. Between a man and his brothers' wife. Between a woman and her brother's wife. Between a man and his mother's brother's wife. In addition to the name taboo, one cannot touch or even approach closely a taboo relative. (Strong) In days gone by, women used to respect taboo males by hiding their faces and sitting with their backs to them, but this is no longer done.

5. The common word is tabooed as well. The taboo also extends to the name-sakes of tabooed relatives, as well as to those called by the tabooed relations in the classificatory system. Hence every one has about half a dozen names to ensure that an alternative is always available for taboo names. When common words are tabooed because of inclusion in a taboo name, the chief means of replacement are periphrasis and simile.

6. When men go to Lów:a Island, they use different words for 'fish', 'sea', 'sun', 'moon', 'rain', 'water', and 'get sick'. When they hunt possum in the bush, they use alternate forms for 'possum', 'male possum', 'female possum', 'bulbous plant where possums go inside'.

7. Different words are used for some body parts (such as thighs, arms, parts of face) and certain personal possessions (such as basket) of taboo relatives. The alternative forms for these are a permanent part of the language. (Strong)

9. Women use different words for various objects such as 'canoe'. (Dying out)

K. GUDANG — Cape York Peninsula, Australia. Frazer 1911:346, 358.

1. From a man to his mother-in-law. From a woman to her father-in-law.

4. The names of the dead are tabooed, and the common word must be immediately dropped and replaced. However, as time passes the word is likely to gradually return to common use.

5. The common word is tabooed as well.

L. DYIRBAL — South of Cairns, Queensland, Australia. Dixon 1972:32.

7. Every speaker has at his disposal two languages: a 'mother-in-law language' and an everyday language. A person would not closely approach or look at a taboo relative, nor speak directly to them. Whenever a taboo relation is within earshot the 'mother-in-law' (or avoidance) language was used. Taboo relatives are: a parent-in-law of the opposite sex, a child-in-law of the opposite sex, and a cross cousin of the opposite sex.

ADDENDA OF NON-AUSTRONESIAN LANGUAGES

In Papua New Guinea:

Bulmer 1965:141 — In Kyaka, taboo on names of recent dead.

Glasse 1965:32 — In Huli, taboo on names of powerful female ghosts.

Oliver 1955:263-265 — In Siwai, name taboo between man and mother-in-law, father's sisters, and mother's brother's wife.

Scorza 1974:201 — In Au, name taboo on any of wife's near family.

Shaw 1974:233 — In Samo, name taboo between all affines.

In Australia (Frazer 1911:346, 358-359):

Kowraregas, Prince of Wales Islands — Same as Gudang above.

Booandik, South Australia — Persons related by marriage speak in low voices and use words different from those in common use.

Victoria — Name taboo on mother-in-law and names of the dead.

Moorunde tribe — Taboos on names of the dead.

Encounter Bay, South Australia — Taboos on names of the dead.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The study of the distribution of word tabooing practices in Austronesia is on-going research. Anyone who can supply information on additional languages, please answer the following questions and mail to: Gary Simons, Box 52, Auki, Malaita, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

Name _____   Affiliation _____

Mailing address _____

Language name _____   Country _____

Is it an Austronesian language?   Yes   No

Map co-ordinates of language center: _____Lat _____Long

Questionnaire continued...

NAMES OF RELATIONS TABOOED

Are the names of any relations tabooed?   Yes   No

If so, what relations are involved?
(Use *from X to Y* to show a one-way taboo where X cannot say
Y's name; use *between X and Y* to show a reciprocal taboo
where neither can say the other's name.)

Is it taboo to say one's own name?   Yes   No

Current status of these practices:
        Strong   Weak   Dying out   Ancient

Any other comments:

NAMES OF HIGH RANKING PERSONS TABOOED

Are the names of persons of high rank tabooed?   Yes   No

Whose? kings, chiefs, political big men, respected men,
strangers, shamans, _____

Current status of the practice:
        Strong   Weak   Dying out   Ancient

Any other comments:

NAMES OF THE DEAD TABOOED

Are the names of the dead tabooed?   Yes   No

Whose? everyone, men only, sacred ancestors, chiefs,
big men, those relatives tabooed in life, _____

Current status of practice:
        Strong   Weak   Dying out   Ancient

Any other comments:

DOES THE NAME TABOO EXTEND TO WORD TABOO?

Are personal names derived from common words?
    All are   Most are   Some are   None are

Is the common word also tabooed?   Yes   No   Don't know

Are words that even sound like the name tabooed? (Such as
words that rhyme or have the same first syllable and so on)
                        Yes   No   Don't know
If yes, can you give some examples:

OTHER FORMS OF WORD TABOO

Describe any practice like 'hunting language' (word taboos
during hunting, fishing, harvesting, mining):

Describe any practice like 'polite language' (special
vocabulary used when talking to or about high ranking
persons, strangers, tabooed relatives).

Questionnaire continued...

> Describe any practice like 'ritual language' (special forms
> of language used by the insiders of a cult or by practitioners
> of a ritual):
>
> Current status of the above practices:
> >   Strong   Weak   Dying out   Ancient
>
> ANYTHING ELSE?
>
> Can you describe any other practices in which names or words
> are tabooed? Any other cases where the language maintains
> two ways to say the same thing and the choice is situationally
> determined (e.g. women's speech, status styles, poetic language)?
> Any forms of disguised language or play language (e.g. pig-Latin)?
>
> DOCUMENTATION
>
> Are your responses based on firsthand experience living
> in the language group?   Yes   No
>
> How sure are you of the reliability of your responses:
>   Very sure   Pretty sure   They're tentative   Based on hearsay
>
> Are any or all of the practices you have described on this
> questionnaire documented in print? If so, please give as full
> a bibliographic citation as you can.

NOTES

1.   The word taboo itself may give some clue as to tabooing's prominence in
     Austronesia. It is a word that English has borrowed from Austronesia,
     apparently brought back from Tonga by Captain Cook (cf. Proto-Polynesian
     *tapu < Proto-Eastern Oceanic *tampu).

2.   Word tabooing also has a potentially significant affect in applied
     linguistics. For instance, in March 1981 I was required to pay a fine of
     $10 in a north Malaita customary court for inadvertently using the name of
     someone's sacred ancestor in a primer for teaching the To'abaita people to
     read their own language. Although the topic of applied linguistics is not
     taken up in the text, many examples of word tabooing's effect on reading
     and literature are reported in the Appendix.

3.   I gratefully acknowledge the sponsorship of the Translation Committee of the
     Solomon Islands Christian Association during the period of fieldwork (March-
     December 1977, December 1979-December 1980).

4.   For the Santa Cruz kinship system, see Davenport 1964.

5.   To comply with this taboo, a mother-in-law always had a cloth handy with
     which she could cover her face and turn the other way in case she were to
     happen upon her son-in-law. A curtain was erected inside a house to
     separate a son- and mother-in-law when one was visiting the house of the
     other. Today the taboo on eye contact seems to be dying out. However, the
     taboo on joking and saying the name are still very strong.

6. Nearly 80 years ago, the Rev. O'Ferrall (1904:233ff. quoted in Frazer 1911:344) described name taboo on Santa Cruz. His description largely coincides with mine. However, he described an additional taboo relationship which does not appear to hold today: none of the men to whom a husband has paid money for a wife may ever utter his name or look him in the face.

7. S.A. Wurm (personal communication) reports that these forms involve morphological variation on top of the phonological variation in the basic root, nyo, no, and ne.

8. The one drawback of this kind of reasoning is that although it demonstrates that a process of phonological modification has been a part of the dialect history, it does not allow us to determine which pairs of forms are related by modification and which are similar by chance. A residue of chance similarities will always remain. Applying the comparative method to find recurring patterns of modification may help us one day to be able to distinguish.

9. There are two other practices which produce the same effect of requiring speakers to maintain synonyms for common words. The first is a set of honorific forms used when speaking of things having to do with eating (including body parts involved) in reference to men to whom the speaker wants to show respect. I have observed this in Kwara'ae and To'abaita thus far. The following examples are from To'abaita (for verbs, the intransitive and transitive forms are given):

Meaning	Common Word	Honorific Form
eat	fanga, 'ania	rere'e, re'ea
drink	ku'u, ku'ufia	'ingo, 'ingofia
edible greens	kwake	tatabo
pudding of taro and Canarium almond	kata	salo
puddings of taro and coconut	kumu, lakeno, suufau	lengo
mouth	foko	(none)
tooth	lifo	(none)
tongue	mea	(none)
lips	ngidu	(none)
neck	lua	(none)

To use the common forms for the above items with reference to men would be very rude. (Note that in the case of the body parts the terms are avoided altogether with no replacement forms.) A breach of this custom does not require compensation payment; it just produces shame.

    The second practice is a series of women's forms for the plural pronouns in Fataleka, Gula'alaa, and To'abaita (Simons 1980). The Proto-Malaitan trial pronouns have had a meaning shift and become the general plural pronouns. The Proto-Malaitan plural pronouns are retained in these three languages, but have become forms used only when the referents are women. Word tabooing, honorific language, and women's forms are all cases which lead to forms that are synonymous in their denotative meanings but have situationally defined distinctions. All are potential trouble spots for the collector of lexicostatistic word lists.

10. For a discussion of diachronic versus synchronic lexicostatistics, see Simons 1977c. On the topic of estimating (or predicting) intelligibility from cognate percentages, see Simons 1979 (Chapters 5 and 6).

11. It should be observed that the method depends on the completeness of the dictionaries. TOB and ARE have the smaller dictionaries; LAU, KWO and SAA have the more extensive. The average effect of counting synonyms shows a trend of the better the dictionary, the greater the effect of synonymy. The results of this method should not be viewed as final, but as pointing to lower limits.

12. In the case of ARE and the form po'ore there has been a strict replacement. However, the overall pattern for the item 'leaf' is one of augmentation and it is therefore counted as such in the statistics of Table 5.

13. All the regular sound correspondences for the 12 Malaitan languages and dialects are known. Levy 1979 gives the correspondences for eight of the languages. I have worked out the correspondences for the remaining four.

14. For purposes of this survey I have grouped the troublesome Reef Islands and Santa Cruz languages (numbers 59 and 60 in Table 1) with Austronesian. This is not meant as a statement of their linguistic affiliation, but rather as an observation that with respect to these data, the two languages show virtually identical responses as their two closest neighbours in the sample, the unquestionably Austronesian Utupua (61) and Banks Islands (62). To exclude Reefs and Santa Cruz would obscure this cultural similarity.

15. For purposes of this survey I have grouped the troublesome Yapese language with Oceanic. With respect to these data, it groups to the east rather than to the west.

16. Note that the New Guinea Pidgin word for 'brother-in-law', 'sister-in-law' and even 'in-laws in general' is tambu (Mihalic 1971:191). This no doubt reflects the wide-spread nature of affinal taboos throughout Papua New Guinea.

17. Note that the chiefly name taboo has a complementary distribution to the ascending generations consanguineal name taboo. Perhaps deeper study will be able to establish a link between the two.

18. A fourth type of taboo, taboos against talking about sex and body functions, was mentioned by a number of sources. I have excluded this kind of taboo from consideration because it is found so universally as to be non-distinctive. Nor, with its highly restricted semantic domain, is its potential effect on language change significant.

19. There are also well-documented cases of honorific chiefly languages in the Loyalty Islands. Nengone (Mare Island) has a chiefly sublanguage called Iwatenu, and Dehu (Lifou Island) has a chiefly sublanguage called Umeng (Leenhardt 1946).

20. James Fox (1977:64) cites other cases of ritual languages in Austronesia. In particular, he has studied the feature of parallelism in these ritual languages and poetic traditions (1971, 1977). One result, reminiscent of replacement mechanisms in word tabooing is the widespread occurrence of prescribed parallel word pairs (that is, pairs of words in which one is conventionally substituted for the other in a parallel construction, as in parallel lines of poetry). For instance, in Rotinese poetry (eastern Indonesia), Fox has compiled a list of over 1000 such word pairs (1977:79). Ritual languages in the Madang area of Papua New Guinea are well documented by Aufinger (1942, 1949) and Dempwolff (1909).

21.   Dyen actually terms most of these reconstructions 'provisional' proto-phonemes, as though the qualification justifies the usage. However, these could never become established proto-phonemes because a natural language could not possibly be like that. So why call them provisional proto-phonemes at all? They should be treated as strictly what they are—observed sound correspondences.

22.   Laycock (1982a) discusses the small size of speech communities in relation to the problem of Melanesian linguistic diversity.

23.   In addition to those acknowledged in the data, I must express my gratitude to two individuals who went out of their way to translate the questionnaire and interview native speaker respondents so as to submit data for nine of the languages: Father Terry Brown (Bishop Patteson Theological Centre, Solomon Islands) and Marit Kana (Summer Institute of Linguistics, Indonesia).

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