

SOLOMON ISLANDS LANGUAGES: AN INTERNAL CLASSIFICATION is the result of many years of research. It consists of a classification of all of the Austronesian languages of the Solomons, based on phonological innovation. A morphologically based classification is in preparation. The phonologically based classification presented in this volume is followed by a lengthy appendix which contains word lists of more than 300 items for all Solomons languages. The book represents a first attempt to classify all of the languages of the Solomons in a systematic way. It provides not only a detailed subgrouping of the languages, but also a considerable body of lexical and phonological source material. SOLOMON ISLANDS LANGUAGES: AN INTERNAL CLASSIFICATION will be of considerable interest to Austronesianists in particular, but also to a wide cross-section of people concerned with the South Pacific.

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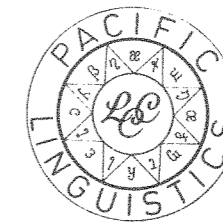
PACIFIC LINGUISTICS

Series C - No.72

SOLOMON ISLANDS LANGUAGES:
AN INTERNAL CLASSIFICATION

by

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4.2 LANGUAGE AND DIALECT IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

In 4.1 it will have been observed that a few unfamiliar language names were listed. These were:

1. Central-East Choiseul
2. West Guadalcanal
3. Talise
4. North Malaita
5. South Malaita

The reason for this change in nomenclature is simply that in a number of cases what have traditionally been considered separate languages have been found to constitute dialects within a single language or languages. Thus, for example, the following rearrangements have been made:

- i) Central-East Choiseul is a term coined to cover Mbambatana, Katazi, Sengga, Lömaumbi and Avasö, as all of these can be shown to belong to a single language.
- ii) West Guadalcanal is the term used here to cover the major dialects of this language, which include Tandai, Nggae, Ndi, Nggeri and Ghari.
- iii) Talise is a cover term for the closely related dialects of the weather coast of Guadalcanal, including Poleo, Koo, Malagheti, Tolo and Moli.
- iv) North Malaitan¹ is used to cover To'ambaita, Mbaengguu, Mbaelelea, and Fataleka.
- v) South Malaitan covers the dialects of Sa'a, Ulawa and Uki Ni Masi.

The above dialects may be termed *major dialects* or *sublanguages*. The criteria on which they are so classified are twofold. First, they are acknowledged by the local communities as being mutually intelligible. Few would disagree that this criterion is met in the case of the dialects of the newly defined languages just listed above. Secondly, it has become an accepted and established practice in Oceania to consider that if two speech communities share more than 80% cognates, based on a basic wordlist of some 200 items (usually some form of the Swadesh wordlist), then they may be regarded as dialects of a single language (see Wurm 1971, Tryon 1976). The dialects listed above also meet this criterion.

As described in 3.0 above, wordlists containing some 450 items were

¹Lau could strictly have been included in North Malaitan on the same criteria. Tradition, however, has dictated that it is best considered as a separate entity.

collected for all of the languages and major dialects of the Solomons. For purposes of language/dialect differentiation, a basic 200-item list was extracted, as listed below, and percentages of shared cognates computed. The list used for this purpose was as follows:

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. *one | 2. *two | 3. **three |
| 4. **four | 5. **five | 6. **ten |
| 7. *hand/arm | 8. **back | 9. *belly |
| 10. *blood | 11. *bone | 12. *breast |
| 13. *ear | 14. *egg | 15. *eye |
| 16. *fat/grease | 17. *hair (body) | 18. *head |
| 19. *heart | 20. *knee | 21. *leg |
| 22. *liver | 23. *meat/flesh | 24. *mouth |
| 25. navel | 26. *neck | 27. *nose |
| 28. *skin | 29. *tail | 30. *tongue |
| 31. *tooth | 32. **wing | 33. *louse |
| 34. louse egg | 35. fly (n) | 36. mosquito |
| 37. butterfly | 38. spider | 39. *fish |
| 40. shark | 41. crocodile | 42. turtle |
| 43. **snake | 44. *bird | 45. chicken |
| 46. rat | 47. flying fox | 48. whale |
| 49. porpoise | 50. possum | 51. *dog |
| 52. pig | 53. **flower | 54. **fruit |
| 55. *leaf | 56. *root | 57. *seed |
| 58. *tree | 59. **grass | 60. banana |
| 61. betel nut | 62. breadfruit | 63. coconut |
| 64. cut nut | 65. sago palm | 66. sugar cane |
| 67. taro | 68. yam | 69. *man |
| 70. *woman | 71. **father | 72. **child |
| 73. *name | 74. canoe | 75. fishhook |
| 76. house | 77. paddle | 78. **rope |
| 79. **spear | 80. *earth | 81. earthquake |
| 82. island | 83. *mountain | 84. *road |
| 85. *sand | 86. **sea | 87. *stone |
| 88. **bush/forest | 89. **day | 90. *night |
| 91. **year | 92. yesterday | 93. tomorrow |
| 94. **dust | 95. *ashes | 96. *fire |
| 97. *smoke | 98. *cloud | 99. **fog |
| 100. lightning | 101. *rain | 102. rainbow |
| 103. thunder | 104. **wind | 105. *sun |
| 106. *moon | 107. *star | 108. *water |
| 109. *I | 110. *you (sg) | 111. **he |
| 112. *we pl.incl. | 113. we pl.excl. | 114. **you (pl) |

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 115. **they | 116. **here | 117. **left |
| 118. **right | 119. *many | 120. *what? |
| 121. **when? | 122. **where? | 123. *who? |
| 124. how many? | 125. **in | 126. **fear |
| 127. *life (live) | 128. *black | 129. *green |
| 130. *red | 131. *white | 132. *yellow |
| 133. **bad | 134. *good | 135. *big |
| 136. *small | 137. *cold | 138. *warm |
| 139. *dry | 140. **wet | 141. *blunt (dull) |
| 142. **sharp | 143. *long | 144. **short |
| 145. *new | 146. **thick | 147. **thin |
| 148. **heavy | 149. sick | 150. **smooth |
| 151. **straight | 152. **cut (wood) | 153. **dig |
| 154. *give | 155. **hit (stick) | 156. **hold |
| 157. **pull | 158. **push | 159. **play |
| 160. **rub | 161. **sew | 162. **split |
| 163. **squeeze | 164. **stab | 165. **throw |
| 166. **tie | 167. **wash (hands) | 168. *come |
| 169. *fall | 170. go | 171. *swim |
| 172. **turn | 173. *walk | 174. **count |
| 175. *know | 176. *say | 177. **sing |
| 178. **think | 179. *burn | 180. **float |
| 181. **flow | 182. *fly (vb) | 183. **swell |
| 184. *bite | 185. **blow | 186. cry |
| 187. *die | 188. *drink | 189. *eat |
| 190. *hear | 191. **laugh | 192. **scratch |
| 193. *see | 194. *sit | 195. *sleep |
| 196. **smell | 197. **spit | 198. *stand |
| 199. **suck | 200. **vomit | |

In the above list, * indicates that the item occurs in the Samarin-modified Swadesh 100-word list (Samarin 1967:220-3), while ** indicates that it occurs in the same 200-word list. Of the original 200 items, 40 were found unsuitable or ambiguous in a Melanesian context and replaced by more appropriate items, the unstarred items on the list. The reasons for rejecting the items from the original Samarin-modified Swadesh wordlist were discussed in full in Tryon 1976:69-71, and will not be repeated here.

The demarcation line between language and dialect as used in this study, then, takes into account the two basic criteria discussed above. The tables of percentages of shared cognates, the recognitions of which were made after sound correspondences were worked out, are

set out in Appendix B, after the wordlists themselves. The sole purpose of the lexicostatistical evidence presented there is to provide evidence of language/dialect differentiation. Subgrouping at higher levels is based entirely on phonological innovation in the present work, substantial evidence being presented for most subgroups so distinguished. It might be noted in passing, however, that the subgrouping picture which emerges from a study of the phonological evidence is strongly supported by the quantitative evidence.

Lexicostatistics, however, has been shown to be an unreliable tool for accurate classification of languages at the higher levels (McElhanon 1970, Guy 1982), as results are often skewed by the non-recognition of loanwords, and especially by the fact that lexicostatistics operates on the basis that all languages change at the same rate, which tenet is demonstrably false. For this reason, the lexicostatistical evidence is used here as a subgrouping device only at the lowest level of the classification. This is not to deny, of course, that lexicostatistics is an extremely useful tool to give a first approximate picture of language relationships upon which other avenues of investigation can be profitably based.

Partial surveys of the languages of the Solomons have been mentioned above, Chapter 2.0, the only one based on lexicostatistics being that of Dyen (1965). That study, basically concerned with the Austronesian family as a whole, will be discussed along with other wider classificatory attempts in 8.0, below.

Within the Solomons themselves, groupings of languages within individual islands, based on lexicostatistical counts, have been made in New Georgia (Early 1982), Santa Ysabel (White 1977, Whiteman and Simons 1978), Malaita (Simons 1980), Santa Cruz (Simons 1977) and the Eastern Outer Islands (Lincoln 1978). The percentages of shared cognates recognised by these scholars for individual areas correlate very well with those recognised by the present writer. One exception concerns the wordlists for Mbareke and Vangunu in the New Georgia area, where Early records a percentage slightly below the language/dialect cutoff for these two speech communities, while the present writer, using a wordlist which contained a number of different items, recorded a figure which was slightly above. In both cases, however, the communities felt that Mbareke and Vangunu were not mutually intelligible, and indeed that Mbareke is no longer used in a pure form by younger speakers. For these reasons the two speech varieties have been considered to be distinct languages for purposes of the classification presented in this study.

4.3 CHECKLIST OF SOLOMON ISLANDS LANGUAGES

Language	Variant Names	Location
Aara	see A'ara (MARINGE)	Santa Ysabel
A'ara	see MARINGE	Santa Ysabel
Aba	see NEMBAO	Utupua
Aghufi	see FAGHANI	San Cristobal
Aiaisii	see 'ARE'ARE	Malaita
Aiwo	see REEFS	Reef Is.
Alu	see MONO-ALU	Shortland Is.
Amba	see NEMBAO	Utupua
Anganinwai	see KAHUA	San Cristobal
Anudha	see NGGELA	Florida
Anuta	see TIKOPIAN	Anuta Is. (Cherry Is.)
Aola	see LENGO	Guadalcanal
Apae'aa	see Sa'a (SOUTH MALAITAN)	Malaita
Apakhö	see ASUMBOA	Utupua
Are	see 'ARE'ARE	Malaita
Areare	see 'ARE'ARE	Malaita
'ARE'ARE	Aiaisii, Are, Areare, I'iaa, Marau, Mareho, Tarapaina, Woo	Malaita
AROSI	Wango	San Cristobal
ASUMBOA	Apakhö, Asimboa, Aujivigno, Vono	Utupua
Aujivigno	see ASUMBOA	Utupua
Avasö	see CENTRAL-EAST CHOISEUL	Choiseul
Avuavu	see Tolo (TALISE)	Guadalcanal
Awa	see MONO-ALU	Shortland Is.
Babatana	see Mbambatana (C-E. CHOISEUL)	Choiseul
Baegu	see Mbaengguu (N. MALAITAN)	Malaita
Baela	see Mbaelelea (N. MALAITAN)	Malaita
Baelelea	see Mbaelelea (N. MALAITAN)	Malaita
Baenggu	see Mbaengguu (N. MALAITAN)	Malaita
Ball	see N. MALAITAN	Malaita
Bambatana	see Mbambatana (C-E. CHOISEUL)	Choiseul
Bañata	see MBANIATA	Rendova
Baniata	see MBANIATA	Rendova
Daranago	see (WEST GUADALCANAL)	Guadalcanal

Note: a) Names in capital letters are preferred names.
 b) Starred names refer to extinct or untraceable languages/dialects.

based on phonological and lexical evidence, and representing all of the languages in the area, is in full agreement with other recently proposed groupings for the South-east Solomons.

As far as other areas are concerned, especially in the western islands, the present study presents strong evidence for the existence of a Western Subgroup, something which has not been possible until the present because of the very limited materials available for these languages.

The present study represents, however, only a preliminary and broad statement of the internal relationships of the languages of the Solomons. Once detailed morphological studies have been completed a more definite statement will be attempted.

APPENDIX A

9.0 SOLOMON ISLANDS WORDLISTS

The wordlists which formed the basis for the classification of Solomons languages presented above are set out below. The transcription is a broad phonetic one. The wordlists, of three hundred and twenty four items, are arranged in fields as follows:

A. Numerals

1. one	2. two	3. three	4. four
5. five	6. six	7. seven	8. eight
9. nine	10. ten	11. hundred	12. thousand

B. Body Parts

13. arm	14. back	15. beard	16. belly
17. blood	18. body	19. bone	20. brain
21. breast	22. ear	23. egg	24. eye
25. fat	26. feather	27. guts	28. hair
29. head	30. heart	31. knee	32. leg
33. liver	34. meat	35. mouth	36. navel
37. neck	38. nose	39. penis	40. skin
41. tail	42. tongue	43. tooth	44. vulva
45. wing			

C. Fauna

46. bird	47. butterfly	48. centipede	49. chicken
50. crocodile	51. dog	52. eagle	53. eel
54. fish	55. fly	56. flying fox	57. hornbill
58. lobster	59. louse	60. louse egg	61. mosquito
62. midge	63. pig	64. porpoise	65. possum
66. rat	67. scorpion	68. shark	69. snake
70. spider	71. turtle	72. whale	

D. Flora

73. bark
77. leaf
81. grass
85. breadfruit
89. mango
93. taro
97. vitex cofassus

74. branch
78. root
82. bamboo
86. coconut
90. pandanus
94. turmeric

75. flower
79. seed
83. banana
87. cut nut
91. sago palm
95. yam

76. fruit
80. tree
84. betel nut
88. hibiscus til.
92. sugarcane
96. alstonia sp.

E. Family & Relationships

98. person
102. mother
106. sister

99. man
103. grandparent
107. line/kin

100. woman
104. child
108. chieftain

101. father
105. elder brother
109. name

F. Domestic

110. board
114. club
118. paddle
122. tobacco

111. bow
115. fishhook
119. rope

112. canoe
116. house
120. spear

113. calico
117. oven
121. thatch

G. Geographical

123. bay
127. garden
131. reef
135. sea

124. cave
128. headland
132. river
136. stone

125. earth
129. island
133. road
137. village

126. earthquake
130. mountain
134. sand
138. bush

H. Physical Astronomy Meteorology

139. day
143. yesterday
147. ashes
151. cloud
155. rainbow
159. sun

140. night
144. today
148. fire
152. fog
156. sky
160. moon

141. morning
145. tomorrow
149. flame
153. lightning
157. thunder
161. star

142. year
146. dust
150. smoke
154. rain
158. wind
162. water

I. Personal Pronouns

163. I
167. we pl.excl.
171. we dl.excl.

164. you sg.
168. you pl.
172. you dl.

165. he
169. they
173. they dl.

166. we pl.incl.
170. we dl.incl.

J. Possessives

174. my
178. our pl.excl.

175. your sg.
179. your pl.

176. his
180. their

177. our pl.incl.

K. Correlatives

181. because
185. how?
189. who?

182. many
186. what?
190. how many?

183. this
187. when?

184. time
188. where?

L. Conjunctions, Prepositions, Psychology, etc.

191. yes
195. left
199. if
203. fear
207. spirit (dead)

192. no
196. right
200. in
204. life
208. spirit (live)

193. here
197. and
201. after
205. love

194. there
198. at
202. below
206. mistake

M. Adjectives

209. black
213. white
217. big
221. dry
225. empty
229. fast
233. new
237. weak
241. thirsty
245. lazy
249. sick
253. tired

210. blue
214. yellow
218. small
222. wet
226. full
230. slow
234. old (thing)
238. thick
242. bald
246. alive
250. smooth
254. wild

211. green
215. bad
219. cold
223. blunt
227. far
231. long
235. old (person)
239. thin
243. dirty
247. correct
251. sore (adj.)

212. red
216. good
220. warm
224. sharp
228. near
232. short
236. strong
240. hungry
244. heavy
248. rotten
252. straight

N. Verbs of Action

255. break
259. fight
263. hunt
267. play
271. squeeze
275. tie

256. cut (string)
260. give
264. kill
268. rub
272. stab
276. wash (hands)

257. cut (wood)
261. hit
265. pull
269. sew
273. start
277. wipe

258. dig
262. hold
266. push
270. split
274. steal
278. work

O. Verbs of Movement

279. come
283. go down
287. bathe

280. dance
284. go up
288. turn

281. fall
285. meet
289. walk

282. go
286. swim

P. Verbs, Mental Processes

290. ask
294. sing

291. count
295. think

292. know

293. say

Q. Verbs, Natural Processes

296. burn
300. swell

297. float

298. flow

299. fly

R. Verbs, Body Action

301. bite	302. blow	303. breathe	304. cry
305. die	306. drink	307. eat	308. hear
309. laugh	310. lie down	311. scratch	312. see
313. sit	314. sleep	315. smell	316. spit
317. stand	318. suck	319. vomit	320. urinate
321. defaecate	322. wait	323. copulate	324. faeces

9.1 INDEX TO WORDLISTS

An index of items presented in the wordlists, together with the corresponding item number is as follows:

after (201)	breadfruit (85)	drink (306)	fruit (76)
alive (246)	break (255)	dry (221)	full (226)
alstonia sp. (96)	breast (21)	dust (146)	garden (127)
and (197)	breathe (303)	eagle (52)	give (260)
arm (13)	brother (105)	ear (22)	go (282)
ashes (147)	burn (296)	earth (125)	go down (283)
ask (290)	bush (138)	earthquake (126)	go up (284)
at (198)	butterfly (47)	eat (307)	good (216)
back (14)	calico (113)	eel (53)	grandparent (103)
bad (215)	canoe (112)	egg (23)	grass (81)
bald (242)	cave (124)	eight (8)	green (211)
bamboo (82)	centipede (48)	empty (225)	guts (27)
banana (83)	chicken (49)	eye (24)	hair (28)
bark (73)	chieftain (108)	faeces (324)	he (165)
bathe (287)	child (104)	fall (281)	head (29)
bay (123)	cloud (151)	far (227)	headland (128)
beard (15)	club (114)	fast (229)	hear (308)
because (181)	coconut (86)	fat (25)	heart (30)
belly (16)	cold (219)	father (101)	heavy (244)
below (202)	come (279)	fear (203)	here (193)
betel nut (84)	copulate (323)	feather (26)	hibiscus til. (188)
big (217)	correct (247)	fight (259)	his (176)
bird (46)	count (291)	fire (148)	hit (261)
bite (301)	crocodile (50)	fish (54)	hold (262)
black (209)	cry (304)	fishhook (115)	hornbill (57)
blood (17)	cut string (256)	five (5)	house (116)
blow (302)	cut wood (257)	flame (149)	how (185)
blue (210)	cut nut (87)	float (297)	how many (190)
blunt (223)	dance (280)	flow (298)	hundred (11)
board (110)	day (139)	flower (75)	hungry (240)
body (18)	defaecate (321)	fly n. (55)	hunt (263)
bone (19)	die (305)	fly vb. (299)	I (163)
bow (111)	dig (258)	flying fox (56)	if (199)
brain (20)	dirty (243)	fog (152)	in (200)
branch (74)	dog (51)	four (4)	island (129)

Index to Wordlists (Cont.)

kill (264)	new (233)	scorpion (67)	steal (274)
knee (31)	night (140)	scratch (311)	stone (136)
know (292)	nine (9)	sea (135)	straight (252)
laugh (309)	no (192)	see (312)	strong (236)
lazy (245)	nose (38)	seed (79)	suck (318)
leaf (77)	old/person (235)	seven (7)	sugarcane (92)
left (195)	old/thing (234)	sew (269)	sun (159)
leg (32)	one (1)	shark (68)	swell (300)
lie down (310)	our pl.excl.(178)	sharp (224)	swim (286)
life (204)	our pl.incl.(177)	short (232)	tail (41)
lightning (153)	oven (117)	sick (249)	taro (93)
line/kin (107)	paddle (118)	sing (294)	ten (10)
liver (33)	pandanus (90)	sister (106)	thatch (121)
lobster (58)	penis (39)	sit (313)	their (180)
long (231)	person (98)	six (6)	there (194)
louse (59)	pig (63)	skin (40)	they (169)
louse egg (60)	play (267)	sky (156)	they dl. (173)
love (205)	porpoise (64)	sleep (314)	thick (238)
man (99)	possum (65)	slow (230)	thin (239)
mango (89)	pull (265)	small (218)	think (295)
many (182)	push (266)	smell (315)	thirsty (241)
meat (34)	rain (154)	smoke (150)	this (183)
meet (285)	rainbow (155)	smooth (250)	thousand (12)
midge (62)	rat (66)	snake (69)	three (3)
mistake (206)	red (212)	sore (251)	thunder (157)
moon (160)	reef (131)	spear (120)	tie (275)
morning (141)	right (196)	spider (70)	time (184)
mosquito (61)	river (132)	spirit/dead (207)	tired (253)
mother (102)	road (133)	spirit/live (208)	tobacco (122)
mountain (130)	root (78)	spit (316)	today (144)
mouth (35)	rope (119)	split (270)	tomorrow (145)
my (174)	rotten (248)	squeeze (271)	tongue (42)
name (109)	rub (268)	stab (272)	tooth (43)
navel (36)	sago palm (91)	stand (317)	tree (80)
near (228)	sand (134)	star (161)	turmeric (94)
neck (37)	say (293)	start (273)	turn (288)

Index to Wordlists (Cont.)

turtle (71)	wash/hands (276)	when (187)	yam (95)
two (2)	water (162)	where (188)	year (142)
urinate (320)	weak (237)	white (213)	yellow (214)
village (137)	we dl.excl. (171)	who (189)	yes (191)
vitex sp. (97)	we dl.incl. (170)	wild (254)	yesterday (143)
vomit (319)	we pl.excl. (167)	wind (158)	you dl. (172)
vulva (44)	we pl.incl. (166)	wing (45)	you pl. (168)
wait (322)	wet (222)	wipe (277)	you sg. (164)
walk (289)	whale (72)	woman (100)	your pl. (179)
warm (220)	what (186)	work (278)	your sg. (175)

Each page of the wordlists contains four glosses, the Solomons language forms for which occupy four pages, as follows:

Page (a): Lists 1-31 (Shortlands, Choiseul, New Georgia)

Page (b): Lists 32-62 (Santa Ysabel, Florida, Guadalcanal)

Page (c): Lists 63-94 (Malaita, San Cristobal)

Page (d): Lists 95-111 (Eastern Outer Islands, Polynesian Outliers)

The languages to which the wordlists correspond are fairly self-evident; a checklist is, however, set out in full in 7.0, above.