

4.4.5. AUSTRONESIAN LANGUAGES: ADMIRALTY ISLANDS AREA

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4.4.5.0. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

It has long been acknowledged that all of the languages of the Admiralty Islands and the small islands to the west are Austronesian.¹ However, because so little vocabulary and grammatical data have been published on the individual languages, uncertainty has persisted right up to the present time as to how they fit into the various schemes for subdividing the Austronesian Phylum into stocks and how they are subgrouped among themselves.

4.4.5.1. EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Linguists have held many different viewpoints on the relationship of the Admiralty area languages to other Austronesian languages.

(a) Moseley (1877:387-90, cited in Ray 1891:10) sought to connect the language of Wild Islands (Sori or Harengan?) with the language of Yap in Micronesia rather than with the Melanesian group of languages. This was based on the marked similarity in form of certain of their words, especially the numerals 'eight' and 'nine'. Ray discusses Moseley's view approvingly.

(b) Hambruch (1908, cited in Smythe 1970:1230) refers to Wuvulu and Aua as being linked with Indonesia, but he seems to regard them as basically Melanesian with some Indonesian elements.

(c) Friederici (1912:228, cited in Bühler 1935:6) describes the languages of Lou, Pak, Baluan and Mouk as Melanesian.

(d) Thurnwald (1910:111) treats the language (*sic*) of the coastal people as Melanesian and the language (*sic*) of the inhabitants of the mountains on Manus, Rambutyo and Pam as non-Melanesian.

- (e) Meyer (1932:188 map) treats all the languages and dialects of the Admiralty area as Melanesian.
- (f) Bühler (1935:6) challenges Thurnwald's claim that the language spoken in the mountains is non-Melanesian.
- (g) Grace (1955:339) lists Wuvulu-Aua and the remainder of the Admiralty area languages as two sections of his Eastern Malayo-Polynesian (now called Oceanic) subgroup of languages, which contains all Polynesian, Melanesian, and Micronesian languages in 19 sections.
- (h) Capell (1954:29; 1962a:56) regards all of the languages of the Admiralty area as Melanesian.
- (i) Smythe (1949:29; 1958; 1970) suggests that the languages of the Admiralty Islands area have multiple origins or strata, having incorporated in varying degrees vocabulary and grammatical features from Papuan, Melanesian, Micronesian, and Indonesian sources.² All of the languages, he says, are Melanesian in general outline.
- (j) Salzner (1960:26-7) regards all of the languages of the Admiralty area as Melanesian.
- (k) Schwartz (1973) believes that the languages of Manus and the nearby islands, including the Hermit Islands (Smythe's Group 3), constitute a single distinctive Melanesian language group at the present time, though their subgrouping may reflect diverse influences and origins.
- (l) Z'graggen (1975:117) feels there is strong evidence that the Seimat and Kaniet languages (Smythe's Group 2) link with the Austronesian languages of the (Lesser) Schouten Islands near the mouth of the Sepik River. However, he feels that there is not enough evidence for positing a link between Wuvulu-Aua (Smythe's Group 1) and the Austronesian languages of the Aitape area.
- (m) Blust (1975a; 1976) feels that there is a persuasive body of lexical and morphological evidence that all of the languages of the Admiralty area (including the western islands) constitute a subgroup within the Oceanic group of Austronesian languages. Investigation in the field did not uncover evidence for a post-Proto-Oceanic subgrouping connection with Mussau or Mendak (New Ireland), Gapapaiwa (Milne Bay), Wogeo, Manam (Schouten Islands), or Takia (Karkar Island). Subsequent work with a broad range of published materials on Oceanic languages has similarly failed to suggest a more inclusive genetic grouping short of Oceanic itself.
- (n) Unfortunately Dempwolff (1937) and Dyen (1965) have not given us their opinions on this matter.

These various opinions should be considered in the light of the vigorous debate of recent years (Capell 1962b) which has seriously questioned the status and unity of the "Melanesian" languages as a stock within the Austronesian Phylum.

Clearly, considerable research is still needed to resolve three main areas of uncertainty.

(a) With which languages of Micronesia, Indonesia, and Melanesia do the languages of the Admiralty area have the closest links?

(b) Are these links based mainly on chance similarities of lexicon and grammar, or are they the result of borrowing, or of genetic relationship?

(c) Does the division of the Admiralty area languages into two or three main groups have approximately the same time depth as the oldest divisions of the Oceanic languages?

4.4.5.2. INTERNAL SUBGROUPINGS

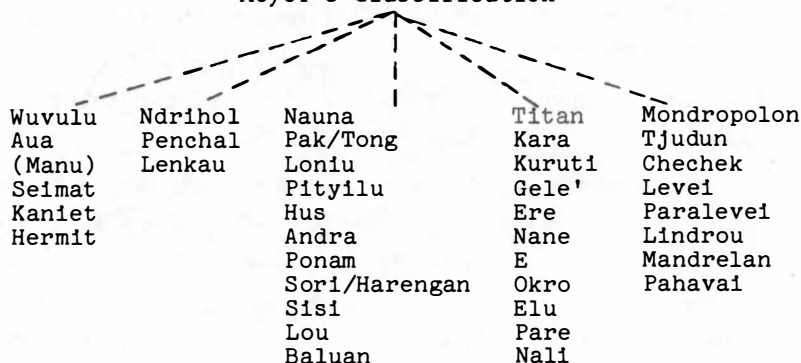
Estimates of the number of languages spoken in the Admiralty area have ranged from 18 to 40. Dietsch (1971) reports that there are 14 languages in the Admiralty Islands proper so different that they are not spoken by a neighbouring group. Schwartz (1973) reports that in the Admiralty Islands proper there are approximately 20 languages that are named, recognised, and treated by the inhabitants as separate languages which present varying degrees of difficulty to the speakers of other languages. Smythe (1949, 1970) lists 21 languages in the Admiralty Islands and 4 more in the islands to the west. Meyer (1932) (and following him, Salzner (1960)) lists and maps 33 (34) "dialects" in the Admiralty Islands and 6 more to the west. This large number can be considerably reduced if one allows for (a) Manu Island being uninhabited, (b) the pairings of Hus-Andra, Baluan-Lou-Pam, Titan-Ndrihol and Wuvulu-Aua as dialects of single languages, and (c) the existence of two dialect chains on Manus Island. Blust (1975a, 1975b) posits somewhere between 19 and 23 languages in the whole Admiralty area, one of which is a large dialect chain on eastern Manus. In Table 1 I have suggested 27 languages as a compromise estimate for the whole area.

There is considerable difference of opinion and uncertainty about the subgrouping of these languages.

(a) Meyer (1932) (and following him, Salzner (1960)) lists his 39 "dialects" in five groups which appear to be geographically based but which nevertheless show considerable correlation with the linguistic classifications of later writers. His groups (see Figure 1) are the

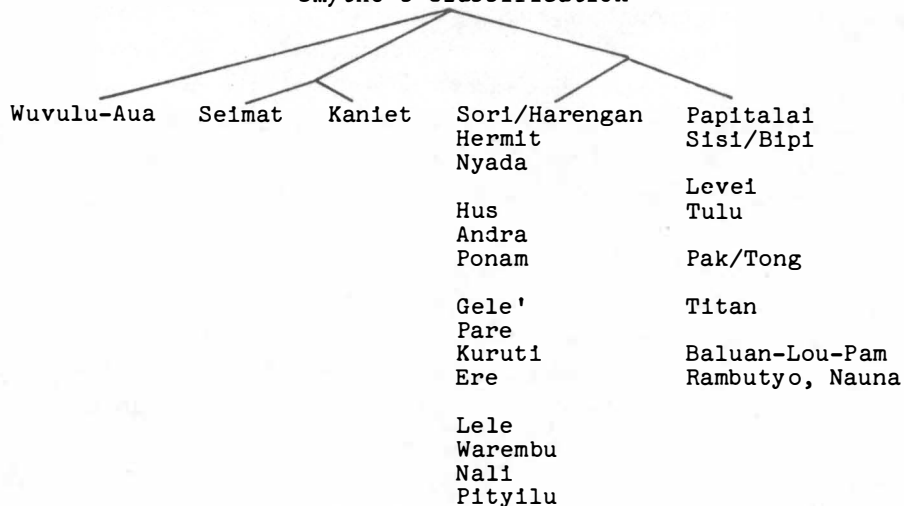
western islands, Rambutyo Island, the smaller islands around Manus, western Manus, and eastern Manus including Titan.

FIGURE 1
Meyer's Classification



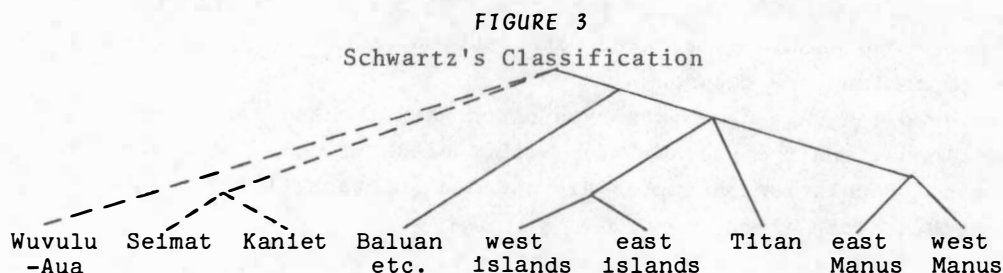
(b) Smythe (1970) divides the languages of the whole area into three main "groups" and then splits two of them each into two "subgroups". His classification (see Figure 2) is based on typology. .

FIGURE 2
Smythe's Classification

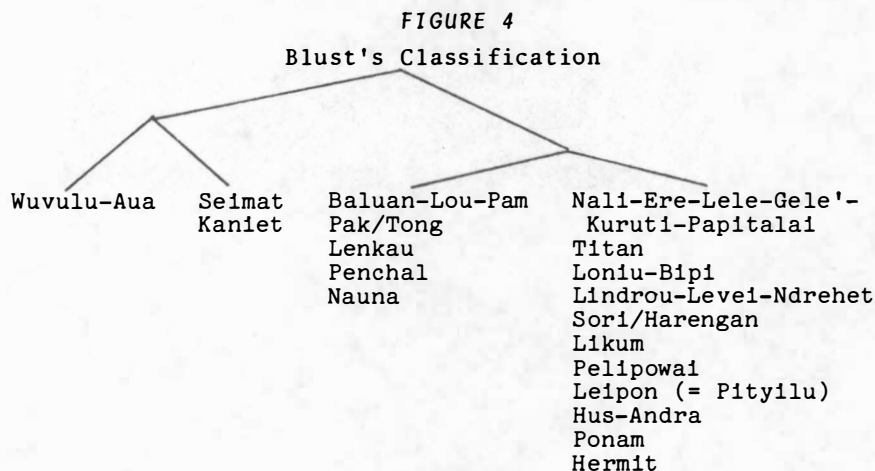


(c) Schwartz (1973) feels that the languages of the Admiralty Islands proper fall into four or possibly five groups: a few of the small islands including Baluan, the rest of the small islands with an east-west division not very sharply marked, the mainland of Manus Island divided rather sharply into an eastern and western group, and the Titan (= Manus) language (spoken on the south coast of Manus and on several

of the small islands). He mentions that the situation is actually much more complicated than this. His classification is presumably based on his intuitive evaluation of speaker comments and of the extensive data that he has collected on several visits to almost every village. I have attempted to diagram Schwartz's view in Figure 3.



(d) Blust (1975a, 1976-77) divides the languages of the whole area into two first-order subgroups, and each one of these into two second-order subgroups (see Figure 4). His classification is based on lexicostatistics and on an examination of exclusively shared innovations.



The classification I have suggested in Table 1 below is a tentative compromise between the four viewpoints described above.

4.4.5.3. CLASSIFIED LIST OF LANGUAGES

A list of "languages" is given in Table 1 along with the villages or islands where they appear to be spoken. Quite a few of the villages named may no longer exist, but they are included because Smythe (1970) listed them. In the spelling of names I have attempted to follow the 1968 edition of *The Village Directory*.

The villages have been grouped together as speaking one language or dialect on the basis of Meyer's map (1932:188), Smythe's village groupings (1970:1213-4), Lee's comments and maps (1974), Dietsch's census groupings (1971), and Blust's village groupings (1975b). There are many inconsistencies between these sources that still remain unexplained, especially in the last two sub-families. So the village groupings presented here should be treated with caution, since they involve several compromises and guesses.

Two-word language names are hyphenated when the two words represent two dialects, and they are written with a slash if only one dialect is involved. Population estimates are based on Dietsch (1971) and *The Village Directory* (1968).

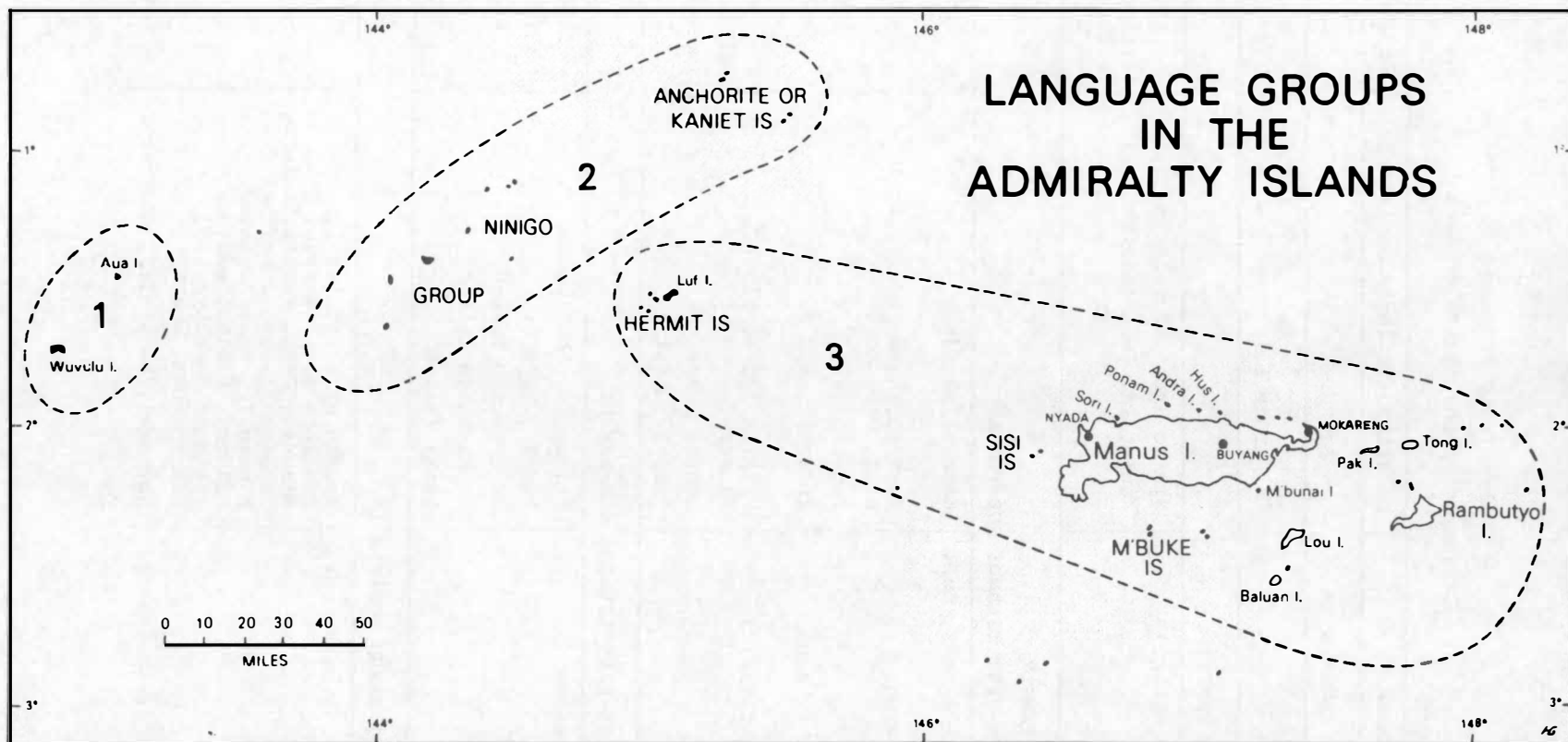


TABLE 1
Languages of the Admiralty Area

Names	Location (villages or islands)	Speakers
1. WUVULU ISOLATE		
Wuvulu-Aua	Wuvulu I. (= Maty I.), Aua I. (= Durour I.)	850?
2. NINIGO FAMILY		
Seimat (= Ninigo) Kaniet ³	Ninigo Group of islands Kaniet Is. (= Anchorite Is.)	450? extinct since about 1950
3. MANUS FAMILY		
3.1. NORTH-WEST ISLANDS SUB-FAMILY		
Hermit ⁴ (= Agomes, Luf, Maron)	Hermit Islands	20
Sori/Harengan	Sori I., Harengan I., Sori No.1, Sori No.2	570
Ponam ⁵	Ponam Island	420
Andra-Hus (= Ahus, Ha'us)	Andra I., Hus I.	810
Leipon (= Pityilu)	Pityilu I., Ndrilo I., Hauwei I.	650
Loniu ⁶	Loniu, Lolak	460
Sisi/Bipi	Sisi I., Bipi I.	530
3.2. SOUTH-EAST ISLANDS SUB-FAMILY		
Baluan-Lou-Pam ⁷	Baluan I., Lou I., Pam I.	1280
Pak/Tong	Pak I., Tong I.	970
Penchal	on Rambutyo Island	400?
Lenkau	on Rambutyo Island	400?
Nauna	Nauna Island	130?
3.3. EAST MANUS SUB-FAMILY		
Titan ⁸ (= Tito, Moanus, Manus, M'bunai)	spoken by seafaring lagoon- dwellers at: Pomassau, Selalou, M'bunai, Peri, Patusi, Loicha, Timoenai (moved from Tawi I.), M'buke I., Mouk I. (near Baluan), Ndrihol and Bursu (both on Rambutyo I.), Langendrowa, Loamat	2550?
Papitalai ⁹ (= Mokareng)	Naringel, Papitalai, Mokareng	520

Nali (= Yiru)	Lauis (= Lawes), ¹⁰ Bulihan, Sonilu, Sirra, Kapor, Karon, Katin, Nohang, Lowala, Yiru, Lahan, Malei	1300?
Ere-Lele-Gele'-Kuruti ¹¹ (= Ere)	Drabito No.1, Drabito No.2, Pau, Londru, Loi (as second language), Metawari, Tau-Undrau, Dramdru, Hatwara, Pitira'it	600?
(= Lele, Elu-Kara, Sabon)	Sabon, Warobi (= Warambei), Lundret, Drano, Bowat No.1, Bowat No.2, Drelap, Yiringo, Ndrosun (= Rossun), ¹² Labakan	1140
(= Gele', Kele, Buyang)	Buyang, Tingau No.1, Tingau No.2, Droia (formerly Kawa, then part of Pelikawa), Korunat	1000?
(= Kuruti-Pare)	Liap, Derimbat, Kari, Pundru, Waimundra, Mundiburio, Badlok, Lomoi, Sau, Koru, Kup, Lowa, Kawaliap (abandoned), Mundrau	1920?
Nane ¹³	Patu, Lala, Loi	300?
E	Peli I., Pelikawa (abandoned)	50?
Okro	Warembu	200?

3.4. WEST MANUS SUB-FAMILY

Lindrou ¹⁴ (= Salien, Nyada)	Nyada, Alukuk, Apubei, Lessau, Sabandruem, Johan, Sopa, Nihon, Kali, Drolu, Salien, Kogo, Sapondralis, Bundrahei, Kabuli, Korrojih	2220?
Mondropolon	Aran, Leihuwa (= Lehewa, Kokou), Saha, Matakau (abandoned?)	300?
Likum	Likum	100?
Level-Tulu { (= Lebej)	Level, Lindro, Banum, Drehet, Puju	600
{ (= Chechek, Tjudun)	Tulu No.1 (= Yiri), Tulu No.2 (= Lowakai), Bundralis	560?
Bohuai ¹⁵ (= Pahavai, Pelipowai)	Bohuai No.1, Bohuai No.2, Pelipowai, Kupano, Lohe, Drabwi, Mandrelan (abandoned?)	400?

4.4.5.4. LANGUAGE USAGE

During the last century, and probably for many before it, there has been a considerable amount of migration of language groups within the Admiralty Islands (Smythe 1958:390). For instance there is the large separation of the Loniu and Sisi/Bipi groups, the founding of Labahan from Mokareng, the founding of Nyada from Buyang, the moving of several inland villages to the coast, and the settling of the Titan-speaking people on land. Most groups on Manus are still fond of moving somewhere else and giving their new village a new name. Very often (such as during the Paliau movement), a group will move to someone else's land. For a time all may go well; then the original inhabitants will start chasing the others off (Lee 1974). All of this has resulted in extensive bilingualism and borrowing, both of which make it difficult to identify language boundaries. In each village on Manus the people are able to understand the language of the next village, even if it is quite different (Lee 1974). In a few instances there are two different language groups living together in the same village. Each group speaks its own language, and yet understands the other well enough for people to converse freely (Lee 1976).

Pidgin English (New Guinea Pidgin, Neo-Melanesian) has been spoken in the area for a long time (Meyer 1932:191). Although Pidgin was widely known elsewhere, when Smythe visited Wuvulu and Aua he found many people, men included, who could not speak Pidgin at all (Smythe 1949:30). Schwartz (1962:223) reported that all of the population on Manus except a few old ladies were at least partially bilingual in Pidgin English. Lee (1974) says that everybody now speaks Pidgin and that even most seven-year-old children are familiar with it. Smythe (1949:31) went so far as to claim that a large part of the population is ignorant of any language other than Pidgin, while those familiar with the vernacular are at the same time all more at home in Pidgin. Lee (1974) disagrees; she insists that everybody speaks the vernacular freely, even at church services or while working. They use Pidgin for communication between themselves only when people from distant groups meet. Since 1973 they have shown an increasing interest in their own languages, both as a part of their cultural heritage that they want to preserve and as a symbol of their identity within the new nation (Lee 1976).

N O T E S

1. This paper has been written on the basis of library research and correspondence; I have done no fieldwork in the Admiralty area. Professor Theodore Schwartz and Sister Theodore Lee kindly wrote with detailed information in reply to my enquiries. Dr Robert Blust read an earlier draft of the paper and generously gave his comments and additional information.

2. In his manuscript (1958) Smythe used the term "Indonesian" in two ways: (a) an older original language from which the Melanesian, Micronesian, Polynesian and Indonesian streams developed, and (b) the Indonesian stream itself. While I was editing his manuscript for publication (as Smythe 1970) it seemed to me that it would help the reader if the term "Austronesian" were substituted for the first of these two usages. In doing this I did not wish to impute to Dr Smythe any view of linguistic history in the Pacific which he did not hold and which the use of this term might imply to some readers.

3. Smythe (1970:1231) mentions a big discrepancy between his Kaniet wordlist and Thilenius's. Blust (1976-77) suggests that more than one language may have been spoken on the Kaniet Islands.

4. Smythe's limited lexicostatistics (1970:1217) suggest that Hermit has had a close borrowing relationship with neighbouring languages of both the North-west Islands Sub-Family and the West Manus Sub-Family. If it is possible to identify the loanwords, the genetic relationships of Hermit should become clear.

5. Smythe (1970:1213, 1217) and Dietsch (1971) mention that Ponam is very similar to Andra-Hus.

6. Blust (1975a) was surprised to find in a preliminary lexicostatistical count that Lonlu and Sisi/Bipi could be regarded as dialects of a single language. Smythe (1970:1214) treated them as two very similar languages. In support of this, Lee (1976) reports that one group of Bipi people claim that they own land at Lonlu. This linguistic relationship is worthy of further investigation.

7. Smythe's lexicostatistical figures suggest that Baluan and Pak may not be as closely related as one would expect in a sub-family.

8. Salzner (1960, map 41) shows Titan with five dialects, but Mead (1930:220) and Blust (1975a) both say there are two dialects. Schwartz (1973) feels that Titan has enough exclusive features to warrant treating it as a separate sub-family within the Manus Family, even though in other ways it is closely related to the neighbouring languages of eastern Manus and the south-eastern islands. Smythe (1970:1228-9) feels that Titan, more than any other language, exhibits some characteristically Indonesian vocabulary and grammatical features. He finds non-linguistic evidence that the Titan-speakers represent fairly recent immigrants in the fact that until recent years they built their houses on piles over the sea, were fishermen rather than gardeners, and were seafaring traders throughout the south-eastern half of the Admiralty Islands. However, I have not been able to find any obvious linguistic connection between Titan and the language of the similar Sea Gypsies (Orang Laut) of Indonesia.

9. The classification of Papitalai needs more investigation. The lexicostatistical information in Smythe (1970:1217) points to a close borrowing relationship with neighbouring languages of the North-West Islands Sub-Family, the South-East Islands Sub-Family, and Titan.

10. Villages Lauis and Yiru diverge somewhat from the others according to Blust (1975b).

11. Ere, Lele, Gele', and Kuruti are very similar and constitute either dialects of one language (Lee 1974) or a dialect chain (Blust 1975a). Blust considers that Nali and perhaps Papitalai are also part of this chain.

12. Ndrosun is considered divergent according to Blust (1975b).

13. It seems likely that Nane and E are closely related. Lee (1974) maps them and Okro as dialects of Ere-Lele-Gele'-Kuruti.

14. Blust (1975a) suggests that Lindrou and Level-Tulu probably constitute a dialect chain.

15. Bohuai and Level-Tulu are presumably dialects or closely related languages since they both originally came from the one group in the central mountains (Lee 1974).

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