

DEFINING THE CENTRES OF THE MARIENBERG LANGUAGE FAMILY

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0. INTRODUCTION

This paper demonstrates the centrality of the Kamasau language to the language family and discusses the factors which have been considered in making that decision. Also the central dialect and village (where applicable) for each language is investigated. The factors which are considered are linguistic centrality, geographic centrality, demographic importance, presence of institutions and social factors (Sanders 1977). Data was collected from 33 villages in a two week period.¹

The Marienberg language family consists of six languages located in the East Sepik Province between Wewak and Marienberg. The languages are: Kamasau, Muniwara, Urimo, Buna, Elepi and Mandi.² The latter two languages consist of one village each, Samap and Mandi respectively. They will be included in discussions of the language family as a whole, but usually omitted under discussions of individual language centres.

1. METHODOLOGY

1.1. PILOT SURVEY

A brief pilot survey was conducted along the coast east of Wewak, collecting wordlists from five villages. The basic wordlist used was the Standard S.I.L. list with some additions and deletions. These lists were then used to identify: words that were difficult to elicit reliably, words with multiple cognates (synonyms), words where the vernacular term was the same for two words on the list (e.g. 'water' and 'river'), and words not found in the culture (e.g. 'canoe' and 'paddle'). Such words were then eliminated from the list for the

remainder of the survey. Also some preliminary hypotheses were formed regarding the classification of Bungain and Mandi languages. The pilot survey lists were also included in the calculations of cognate percentages.

1.2. CONDUCTING THE SURVEY

During the main part of the survey, lists from 28 villages were collected in the languages of Bungain (3), Buna (10), Kamasau (5), Muniwara (3), Samap (1), Urimo (6). In the village of Tring (Kamasau language), three lists were taken: two from men, and one from a group of women. These were to serve as a control. How the scores were used is discussed in section 1.4. Six of the 35 collected lists were from women and the rest from men.

As well as linguistic data, a sociological questionnaire was utilised (Appendix B). The answers to this were usually obtained from one person in the village, generally a woman, while the men were giving a wordlist. Where time was limited, the main items collected were those concerning marriage exchanges and sociolinguistics. It was generally found that women did not readily answer questions about singsings and traditional enemies, perhaps since these are men's domain. Also the women's responses indicated they have less contact than men outside a very close circle of villages. Thus in future it would seem best to interview a man and a woman in each village, or a mixed group of men and women.

1.3. RELIABILITY

In order to give the reader an idea of the reliability of the data, we want to make it clear that the data was not phonemicised. Throughout the survey it was necessary at times to use an informant living outside his home village. When this was the case, care was taken to ensure that his home was indeed the village concerned. Also the length of time he has been absent from his village was ascertained. If he had been absent for some time, his degree of contact with his home village was determined. Twenty-two lists were taken from persons living in their home villages and nine were elicited from individuals who were living away from their home villages at the time. Most of the latter were living within easy walking distance from their home village.

There were four lists which were taken from people who had lived for some time in a different place than their home village. The Samap list was taken from individuals who have been living in Wewak, although

the primary informant was an older man who had come from Samap to visit his relatives. The Ariapan list was collected from a man whose father was from Gavien, where he was then living, and whose mother was from Ariapan. He had evidently lived there for some time and pointed out distinctions between Gavien words and those of Ariapan. The Mansep list was collected from a group of families who are living at Marienberg Mission Station so that their children can attend school. The list for Waskurin was elicited from a woman living with her husband in Angoram. The only list we would find of questionable reliability is the Samap list. The rest we consider to be quite reliable.

1.4. ANALYSING THE DATA

Following the survey a few further items were eliminated as some words did not seem to get a consistent response. For example, in the village of Tring, where three wordlists were taken, three different words were given for the item 'yes'. So this term was eliminated in the calculations. The remaining words were marked as being 'cognate' or 'non-cognate'. It should be noted that the term 'cognate' is here used to mean items which are phonetically similar (synchronously). The items compared had to be at least 50% similar if they were to be called cognate. If two phonetic segments differed by only manner of articulation (or a slight shift in the point of articulation) the segments were considered to be the same. Consonants were given more weight than vowels in making the decisions.

The three wordlists taken in Tring served as a control. These scored 90% cognate between them. So this score was adjusted to 100% on the assumption - perhaps fictional - that a village should be 100% cognate with itself. The other scores were also adjusted on the assumption that the factors which affected the lists in Tring also affected the other lists elicited. So they were adjusted according to the formula

$$s = 100/90 \times rs$$

where s is the adjusted score and rs is the raw score.

The cognate percentage for a pair of languages was obtained by calculating the mean score of the percentage scores between those languages. Thus the percentage score for Urimo (6 lists) and Kamasau (5 lists) is the mean of the thirty individual percentage scores.

2. LINGUISTIC CENTRE

2.1. LANGUAGE FAMILY

On the basis of lexicostatistic data,³ Kamasau is the more linguistically central language (Figure 1). Kamasau has the highest average percentage of the group, thus indicating its lexicostatistic centrality. After the cognates have been adjusted it shares 49% cognates with Elepi, 50% with Urimo, 22% with Mandi and 21% with Buna. Although the percentage with Buna is not high, it is slightly higher than any of the percentages between Buna and the other languages. The other close relationships in the family are between Mandi and Muniwara (41%). The people in Mandi said they spoke the same as the people in the Muniwara language, and some of them had parents from that language. So it could be that this was once a dialect of Muniwara that has become isolated. Bungain language shows consistently low percentages of cognates with all the languages except Mandi (27%). This could be due to recent borrowing as Mandi is geographically surrounded by the Bungain language.

Figure 1
Cognate Percentages for the Language Family

Mandi = 25% average cognates						
20	Elepi = 27%					
22	49	Kamasau = 30%				
41	26	24	Muniwara = 24%			
20	31	50	21	Urimo = 26%		
19	20	21	16	18	Buna = 18%	
27	14	16	16	17	16	Bungain = 18%

Of the four major languages, Kamasau appears typologically most conservative as it has probably retained the most of the original features of the language family. It has at least three noun classes, while the others have only two that could be readily identified. It also has agreement in number, which only Muniwara has as well. It would appear that the languages at one time had even more noun classes than they do now. Father Kirschbaum wrote in 1926 that at that time Buna had evidence of twelve noun classes (Laycock 1973) (and nine noun classes in an earlier note published in 1922 - Laycock 1975). However, we found only two classes (gender), so it may be that some of the noun classification has been lost due to contact. Therefore, it would appear that Kamasau has the most conservative form of grammar. Once again, this could be due to its relative isolation until recently, and the fact that it is surrounded by the other languages of the family.

Other typological features which we studied were actor pronouns, verb prefixes, object markers, number systems and tense indication. The findings on actor pronouns and verb prefixes are listed in Appendix C. It is to be noted that all of the languages had the third singular feminine verb prefix *w-* which is supposed to be almost diagnostic of the Torricelli Phylum (Laycock 1975). The word order is generally subject-object-predicate, with only two languages indicating a possible object marker, Urimo and Muniwara. The counting systems were all basically the same with counting by 'hands', except for Buna which had a distinct term for each number from one to ten. Tense indication was generally a free time word.

A sociolinguistic questionnaire (Appendix B) showed that most of the people are unable to understand any of the other languages in the family. The exceptions are villages on the edge of a language which can sometimes understand the speech of neighbouring villages, e.g. Kamasau and Yaugiba, Mandi and the Bungain village of Maur, and Elepi and Kamasau. Some of what is learned may be a result of contact because of intermarriage between nearby villages. Some of the older leaders in the language groups can understand the surrounding languages. This was reported to us in Urimo and Buna, 'big men' of these villages being able to understand some of Kamasau and Muniwara. Therefore, the sociolinguistic data seemed to confirm that Kamasau, or perhaps Muniwara would be most central, in that more persons might be able to understand it.

2.2. INDIVIDUAL LANGUAGES

2.2.1. Kamasau

This language appears to have two dialects which are mutually intelligible. (These were indicated by responses to the question, "Who speaks a little differently than you do?") Wandomi and Yibab were consistently considered as a little different, by the people themselves, and by the villages of Kamasau, Tring and Wau as well. Also, they had about 20% lower cognates than most of the other villages.

Figure 2
Cognate Percentages for Kamasau Language

Wandomi	=	71%	average cognate
71	Wau	=	81%
78	90	Tring	= 85%
73	88	92	Kamasau = 84%
62	74	80	84
			Paruwa = 75%

Another village which was not even mentioned by any of the other Kamasau villages was Paruwa. This is a village located less than a mile from the Urimo village of Samowia (fourteen miles from Tring). The wordlist collected from that village had 80% cognates with Tring, and 71% with Samowia, so it may also be a part of the Kamasau language.

2.2.2. Muniwara

This language appears to have only one dialect from the data we collected. Everyone in the language said that they spoke the same, and their cognate percentages ranged from 90 to 100%.

2.2.3. Urimo

The data we collected would support one dialect for Urimo. The cognate percentages between villages ranged from 76 to 100%, and the people said that everyone spoke exactly the same.

2.2.4. Buna

There is data to support two dialects for this language: a northern dialect including the villages Ariapan, Waskurin, Boig and Kasiman, and a southern dialect including Suk, Masan, Bonam, Mansep, Mambel, Gavien and Mangen. The cognates within each dialect ranged from about 80 to 100%, whereas between villages of the two dialects they ranged from 50 to 80% (Figure 3). This was in agreement with the socio-linguistic response of the people, who grouped themselves into two main speech communities. There was further distinction noted within the southern dialect, as people stated that Masan spoke just a little differently from the others. This was stated by Masan as well.

Figure 3
Cognate Percentages for Buna Language

Mambel = 83% aberage cognates									
90	Mangen = 86%								
91	100	Suk = 91%							
98	92	100	Bonam = 82%						
89	97	100	91	Mansep = 87%					
86	96	100	97	100	Gavien = 89%				
87	92	100	81	92	94	Masan = 83%			
78	77	81	77	80	84	74	Ariapan = 82%		
68	70	78	52	71	77	66	99	Waskurin = 74%	
64	59	68	50	66	67	60	86	89	Kasiman = 68%

Although the cognate percentages were not very low (ranging from 81 to 100%), the Masan speech is intelligible to all the southern villages, the attitude of the people showed that they felt themselves to be different.⁴

Intelligibility between the northern and southern dialects seemed rather varied. The dialects are sufficiently different that most of the women from the south are unable to understand the other dialect readily, and the women in Mambel said that they use Melanesian Pidgin when talking with the women from Ariapan. The older men, especially the 'big men', are able to understand the speakers from the other dialect, probably as a result of more travel and contact. The village of Gavien, which is a three hour walk from Ariapan, has some inter-marriage with that village. The people there said that some of them could understand the Ariapan dialect. One man was bilingual since his mother was from Ariapan. It may be that the southern dialect, being more prestigious, may not be able to understand the northern dialect, as much as persons from the northern dialect would understand them. Our questioning about intelligibility was done mainly in the south so we have no data to confirm this hypothesis.

3. GEOGRAPHIC CENTRE

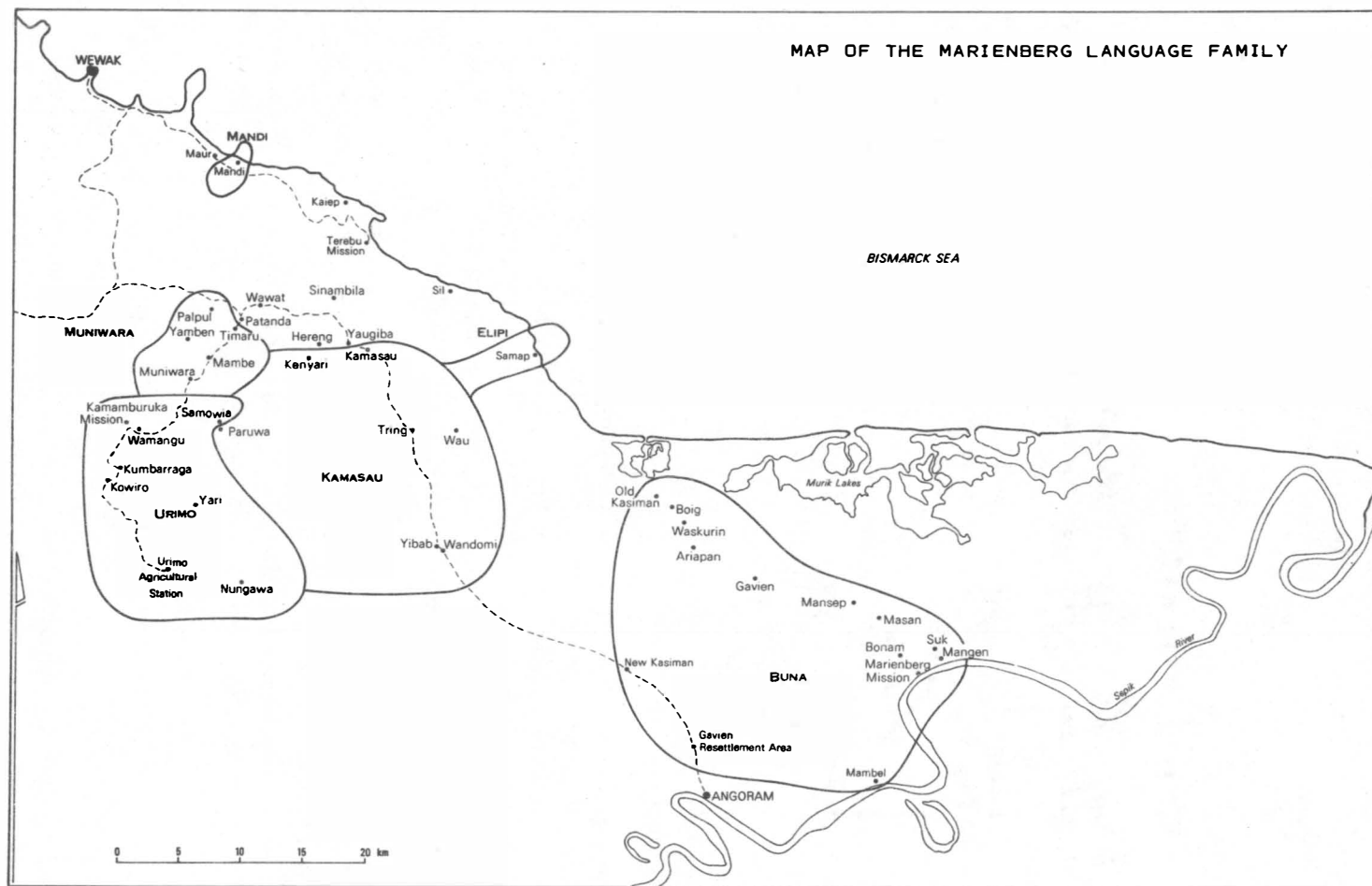
3.1. LANGUAGE FAMILY

The geographic centre of the Marienberg language family is the Kamasau language. Twelve miles to the east of it is Elep1, on the coast. The Buna language group begins twelve miles east and extends about 25 miles south to the Sepik River. Ten to fifteen miles directly west is the Muniwara language, and south of it the Urimo language. To the north about twenty miles is Mandi, surrounded by the Bungain language,⁵ which stretches from Mandi down to the Kamasau and Muniwars languages. When midpoints of various parts of the family are taken into account, the group of midpoints marked forms a band extending from just west of the Kamasau language, through the centre of it, and continuing just east of it (see Map). All the languages may be reached by road from Kamasau, except Elep1 and Buna which are now accessible by foot or boat.

3.2. INDIVIDUAL LANGUAGES

3.2.1. Kamasau

The geographic centre of the Kamasau language is Tring. A road extends north to the village of Kamasau (five miles) and south to Yibab and Wandomi (seven miles). The other villages are accessible



by trail only: Wau (two miles east), Kenyari (two miles west of Kamasau), and Paruwa (fourteen miles west).

3.2.2. Muniwara

The geographic centre of the Muniwara language is Mambe. Timaru (two miles north) and Muniwara (three miles southwest) are on a road, Palpul (three miles north) and Yamben (two miles southwest) are both accessible by trail. These villages are sufficiently close for geographic centrality to be less important than other factors.

3.2.3. Urimo

The geographic centre is Yari, which is five miles from the nearest road. Extending in a semi-circle around it are: Nungawa (seven miles southeast), Kowiro (seven miles west), Kumbaragga (seven miles northwest), Wamangu (eight miles northwest) and Samowia (six miles northeast). The village which is most centrally located on the road is Kowiro. From this village it is five miles to the furthest northern village on the road and seven miles south to the other end of the road. The most distant village is Nungawa, thirteen miles southeast.

3.2.4. Buna

The geographic centre of Buna is either Gavien or Mansep. These two villages are about two miles apart. If the half-way point between them as they are located on the map is used, the following distances for surrounding villages result: eight - twelve miles northwest for the villages of Ariapan, Waskurin, Boig and Kasiman; seven - thirteen miles southeast for the villages of Masan, Bonam, Suk and Mangen; eighteen miles south to Mambel, located on the Sepik River; and about fifteen miles to the Gavien and Kasiman resettlements which are located near the road from Angoram to Wewak.

4. DEMOGRAPHIC CENTRE

4.1. LANGUAGE FAMILY

Demographically, Buna is the most important language in the Marienberg family with a population of 1,300.⁶ However it is also geographically the most distant. Its isolation would detract from its overall centrality in spite of its large size. Of the remaining languages, Muniwara (954) ranks first, Kamasau second (802), then Urimo (534), Mandi (212) and Elepi (179).

4.2. INDIVIDUAL LANGUAGES

4.2.1. Kamasau

The demographically important villages of the Kamasau language are Kamasau (150), Tring (140) and Paruwa (140). The remaining four villages have from 80 to 100 persons each.

4.2.2. Muniwara

In the Muniwara language the demographically most important villages are Yamben (250) and Palpul (240). Muniwara is next with 186 people and the other three villages have 150 or less.

4.2.3. Urimo

The demographically most important villages are Wamangu, Kowiro and Kambaragga, each with between 130 and 150 people. The other three villages have less than 70 people each.

4.2.4. Buna

The southern dialect makes up 65% of the language's population. The two largest villages, Mansep and Mangen, are also in the southern dialect, each with a population of about 220. Mambel, Waskurin, Gavien and Boig are also fairly large with 130 to 160 people. Since Mansep has almost 100 persons more than Gavien this might indicate its greater importance, and perhaps increased demographic centrality.

5. INSTITUTIONS: MISSION AND GOVERNMENT

5.1. LANGUAGE FAMILY

All the languages in the Marienberg family have at least one primary school in their area except for Elepi and Kamasau, the latter having only recently been made more accessible by the presence of a road from Angoram to Wewak.

There is only one hospital in the language family, located at the Marienberg mission. Other hospitals are located in Wewak and Angoram, which are outside the actual language family borders, but are used by the people. Aid posts are also located at Tring, Mambe, Wawat and Wamangu.

Muniwara and Buna have Catholic priests living within the language group at mission stations. This gives additional prestige to these languages. Villages in the other languages are visited periodically by a priest.

5.2. INDIVIDUAL LANGUAGES

5.2.1. Kamasau

The Kamasau language seems to be the least affected by institutions. The government contact has been mainly through schools which are located outside the Kamasau language area. The schools attended are Badjiman primary, two - three miles north of Kamasau village, and Kaup primary school, a sixteen mile walk from Kamasau and twelve miles from Tring. Kamasau and Tring have several children in school whereas Yibab and Wandomi have very few children who have continued in school.

The council representative for the villages of Kamasau, Wau, Yibab, Wandomi and Tring is now located in Tring. This is also the site of an aid post. The Kamasau language village of Kenyari, is in the Yaugiba council area.

It appears that mission contact has not been as great as for other languages, a priest occasionally visiting and staying short periods. The nearest Catholic mission station is Mambe, eleven miles by road.

5.2.2. Muniwara

The Catholic mission station is located at Mambe, giving prestige to the villages there. A priest makes his base there, going out regularly to the villages in this language. The majority of the people are baptised Catholics. The Mambe primary school is located at the mission, with pupils coming from all the surrounding villages. There is also an aid post at Mambe. Therefore, it would appear that Mambe is the institutional centre of the Muniwara language.

5.2.3. Urimo

There are several schools in this language area. The Swiss mission has a primary school near Wamangu, the Catholic Church had one in the past near their Urimo station, and the Seventh Day Adventists have one near the Nagam River. These are well spread out, and attended quite well by those living on the roads. The most isolated villages, Nungawa and Yari, have few pupils. They would seem to be the least prestigious villages. Kowiro, site of the council for this area, would seem to be quite prestigious. Wamangu has a medical aid post. The Agricultural Stock and Fisheries Station is not located at any traditional village site but is central to three. So the institutions in this language are much more spread out. Kowiro, as site of the council would perhaps be among the most prestigious villages.

5.2.4. Buna

The Buna villages are a part of four separate councils: Suk +, Bonam and Mangen; Mansep +, Gavien and Masan; Waskurin +, Ariapan, Boig, and Kasiman; Imbuando + (another language group) and Mambel. (+ indicates that the councillor in these sets of villages is from the village thus marked.) Thus the villages of Suk, Mansep, and Waskurin might be more prestigious because of the presence of the councils.

The Catholic mission at Marienberg gives prestige to the villages nearby. There is a primary school which several children from each of the surrounding villages attend. Some parents from villages too far to walk to each night have come to live with their children at Marienberg. Thus there is a small Mansep settlement close to the river. The priests regularly travel to distant villages to have Mass: the closest villages come to Marienberg each Sunday.

The government now has schools at Taway (1952) and Angoram. These schools are attended mostly by those from the northern villages of Kasiman, Ariapan, Gavien and Mansep, as well as Mambel near the Sepik River.

5.2.5. Elepi

Samap villagers send their children to one of two schools: Kaup primary school and Balik primary school.

5.2.6. Mandi

Mandi has a primary school located there, and is near Brandi High School. Being near Wewak, the percentage of children attending school is a good deal higher.

6. SOCIAL FACTORS

6.1. LANGUAGE FAMILY

Social factors seem to be most important in showing relationships and prestige within one language. Trade exchanges can lead to regular patterns of interaction between people from different languages, but no such patterns were discovered in the Marienberg family. This does not mean there were not trade routes used by the ancestors, but none are presently apparent. Now people seem to sell market products in towns (Wewak, Angoram), at mission stations and school sites (Marienberg, Mambe, Urimo), or along the road at roadside markets.

The remaining social factors seem to be most important within the language group itself. Rather than present one aspect at a time, an attempt will be made to show how attitudes and relationships of various villages within a language are reflected in marriage, singsings, stated enemies, and a feeling of village proximity. Origin stories where collected, will be given as well since marriage ties with the ancestral village appear to remain very strong.

6.2. INDIVIDUAL LANGUAGES

6.2.1. Kamasau

The closest relationships between villages in this language appear to be between Wandomi and Yibab, Wau and Tring, and Tring and Kamasau. As well as being geographically close, the close relationship between Wandomi and Yibab is shown by the fact that they intermarry almost exclusively.

Tring and Wau are also geographically close, only a one hour walk apart. Tring has received most of its wives from Wau, and a few from Kamasau and Kenyari. They have sent wives to Sinambila (Bungain language), Chimbu (Highlands), and Kubalia. Although it is a two to three hour walk from Tring to Kamasau, the distance does not seem as great to the people as the distance down to Yibab and Wandomi. Tring has also had contact with Kenyari, Hereng and two Bungain villages through singsings. It is interesting to note that Tring also named Kenyari, Hereng and Kamasau as enemies of their ancestors.⁷

Kamasau receives wives from Tring, but not Wau, Yibab or Wandomi (the latter two they claim were ancestral enemies). Kamasau also sends wives to Bungain villages as well as to Tring. Kamasau stated that they had singsings with all the other Kamasau villages as well as Yaugiba (Bungain). Either Kamasau or Tring would appear to be the most prestigious village because of their widespread contact through intermarriage and singsings.

6.2.2. Muniwara

The only information collected about social factors in this language was the marriage ties that Timaru has. They receive wives from Palpul and Mambe, and send wives to Mambe, Wawat and Patanda, the latter two villages being in the Bungain language.

6.2.3. Urimo

The villages in this language seem to be quite unified. Their origin story is that the ancestors of the Urimo language group came

from Perliwari or Tunanumbi (west of the Urimo language), and then founded Urimoragwa, near the present village of Wamangu. All the other Urimo villages originated from this primal village.⁸

Kowiro seems to be somewhat central and prestigious in this language, sending and receiving wives from Kamaragga, Wamangu and Yari. Yari claimed that they did not send their women to any other village, which conflicted with Kowiro's statement that one wife came from there. A man from Yari also said that some men get their wives from other places - if they are important men. Nungawa said that they had sent one woman to Kowiro, and received one from there as well. Singsings seemed to be attended reciprocally between all the villages within the Urimo language as well as with the nearby Muniwara. None of the villages named any of the other Urimo villages as ancestral enemies, although they did mention Boiken villages and Angoram as past enemies. Kowiro mentioned Kamaragga, Wamangu and Yari as close villages, while Nungawa mentioned Yari as close but gave no walking time. The data collected would suggest that Kowiro is the prestige center of the language, having the councillor from that village, as well as marriage ties with many of the surrounding villages.

6.2.4. Buna

This language divides quite readily into two groups: north and south. None of the northern or southern villages listed the other as ancestral enemies, but there seems to be a lack of contact, also reflected in the two separate dialects previously mentioned. The only intermarriage between villages between the south and north appears to be Gavien with Ariapan and Kasiman, and then Masan with Waskurin. Otherwise, the north and south do not appear to intermarry.

In the north there are four villages: Kasiman, Waskurin, Boig and Ariapan. Most of the people from Kasiman have reportedly moved to the Kasiman resettlement which is a two hour walk from Angoram, leaving only a few old people in the original village. The original Kasiman village feels Kis village (Austronesian language) to be close and exchanges wives with the villages of Kaup (Austronesian language), Boig and Ariapan. Boig also sends wives to Kis, while Ariapan sends them to Waskurin and Gavien. We did not gather enough data from the northern group to be able to tell which is the most prestigious village.

In the south are seven villages: Gavien, Mansep, Masan, Bonam, Suk, Mangen and Mambel. Mansep and Masan both claim Gavien as their 'brother', although Masan did not claim any marriage ties to Gavien. Gavien sends wives to Mansep. The strong tie between them was also

confirmed by the presence of men from Mansep who were helping to build a house at Gavien the day we visited. Mansep sends wives to Bonam too, although both stated that their ancestors were enemies and we heard that there had recently been a fight between people of these villages. Mansep and Masan named each other's ancestors as enemies, although Masan sends wives to Mansep.⁷ Three of the southern villages, Mansep, Masan and Suk, intermarry with villages from other language families - the former with Murik Lakes, and the latter with Bien. Mambel, although living very close to Imbuando village, stated that they did not intermarry there.

So most of the southern villages seem to intermarry with each other, even with Masan, which everyone said spoke a bit differently. Mambel intermarries with everyone as well, being a long way by foot, but only one and one-half hours by motor canoe. The people from Mambel told us that they used to live about five hours from Mambel by trail. Then in 1949 they moved to the new site on the river. Because of their marriage ties with Mansep, Gavien, Masan and Mangen we would hypothesise that their old village site was about half way between Marienberg and Gavien, a place where we saw a few houses left from a deserted village. Therefore, the southern villages seem to function as a unit, while the northern villages are felt to be distinctly different. The southern dialect appears to be more prestigious.

6.2.5. Elepi

The people from Samap said that their place of origin is the village of Wau. They separated due to fighting among themselves. There is an exchange of wives between these two villages.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1. LANGUAGE FAMILY

The central language in the Marienberg language family appears to be the Kamasau language. Geographically it is the most central, being surrounded by the other languages. Linguistically it is central in that it has the highest average cognate percentage of the six languages in the family. After cursory study it also appears to have the most conservative form of the grammar. Sociolinguistically either Kamasau or Muniwara seem most central in that the most persons from other languages might be able to understand them.

Two factors do not support Kamasau as the most central language: demography and institutions. Buna and Muniwara both exceed Kamasau

in population. Kamasau does not have the institutions, and so would probably not have as much prestige from that source as some of the surrounding languages. However, these factors need to be considered against the total picture. Buna, with the greatest population is geographically isolated from the rest of the language family, and shows less close linguistic relationships. The population of Muniwara is only about 100 more than that of Kamasau, so that would not be as great an influencing factor.

The presence of institutions is an indication of development in an area. In determining the central language in a language group for a vernacular literature program there would be two choices on the basis of institutions:

1. Choose the most developed language group, as they are probably the most prestigious; or
2. Choose the least developed group, as they may be least qualified to work as national authors and literacy supervisors.

It is vital to centre a literature program in the prestigious dialect of a language so that it will be acceptable to the largest number of people. However, in a language family, where individual editions of vernacular literature will need to be produced in surrounding languages anyway, the education factor needs to be taken into account.

Languages which have individuals who are highly educated may be able to provide better educated authors. In this case it might be an advantage to choose the language which is least developed to begin the work, in the hope that it would be possible to work with national authors from the other languages. In the Marlenberg family, it appears that Kamasau may have the lowest rate of educated persons at present, as a result of less contact. Therefore, on this basis it seems that Kamasau would be the most likely language in which to begin such a work. This would concur with the linguistic and geographic centrality.

7.2. INDIVIDUAL LANGUAGES

In this section, although a central village will in some cases be chosen, the emphasis will be upon the central dialect. It would be important to have any vernacular literacy materials prepared in the most central dialect. The availability of persons who were willing and able to work as authors would probably be more important than which village a person was from.

7.2.1. Kamasau

The central dialect includes the villages of Tring, Wau and Kamasau. Wandomi and Yibab are less prestigious as shown by their lack of education, lack of intermarriage with the rest of the villages in the group, and smaller population.

The central village within the most prestigious dialect could be either Kamasau or Tring in terms of population and high prestige as demonstrated through intermarriage and linguistic similarity. However, Kamasau is a border village and it seems better to choose a village which is more geographically central. Therefore Tring appears to be the best choice. Also the council representative is from Tring, and this might increase its prestige.

7.2.2. Muniwara

Mambe seems to be the geographically central village in Muniwara, which has only one dialect. Not only is this the geographic centre but also the institutional centre. Yamben and Palpul have the largest population so it may be that one of these villages is the traditional centre of the language. This would need to be confirmed.

7.2.3. Urimo

The Urimo language seems to have one dialect. Kowiro is the centre, as it is centrally located on the road, has marriage ties with most of the villages in the language, and has the councillor for that area.

7.2.4. Buna

The language consists of northern and southern dialects divided by a geographical barrier of a three hour walk through sword grass. The southern dialect seems to be the most prestigious as it contains 65% of the population, is closer to the Marienberg mission with its prestige, and is nearer the river which offers a route of communication to the rest of the Sepik. The advent of the road from Angoram to Wewak could cause changes in prestige in the future.

The central village in the language appears to be Mansep, which is centrally located within the language, and is also a member of the more prestigious dialect. It is one of the largest villages, has a councillor, and the people intermarry with most of the other southern villages.

N O T E S

1. The survey was done by Phil Staalson, Arden and Joy Sanders, members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, from January 26 to February 5, 1977.
2. Names used for these languages are those used by D.C. Laycock (1973:15-17).
3. There is danger in placing too much weight on lexicostatistical data, especially at the language family level (Sanders 1977). However, typological features are much more difficult to quantify, so lexico-statistical data are being included as well.
4. This village is located in a more swampy area than the rest of the villages, and the people have more interaction with the Murik Lakes people (Nor language family), so this might be part of the reason for their feeling of being different.
5. Laycock (1973) classifies the Bungain and Gapun languages as the Gapun Stock/Family, in the Gapun Sub-Phylum of the Sepik Ramu Phylum. We would hypothesise that it may actually belong in the Torricelli Phylum (as a separate family) on the basis of the subject marking by prefix, especially the third feminine w- prefix which is almost diagnostic of the Torricelli Phylum.
6. Population figures for this paper were acquired at the Wewak Provincial headquarters, November 1976 figures.

7. This might represent a typical pattern in Papua New Guinea where villages were enemies, intermarried to establish peace, but continued to fight.

8. This would support the theory that when the Ndu Family came north they split the Torricelli Phylum, as Tuanumbi is west of the Urimo language. The language family could then have been forced to move eastward.

APPENDIX A

Basic Wordlist

The majority of these items were elicited in each village. The items listed were taken mainly from the Standard S.I.L. Wordlist, with changes as indicated under Methodology (Section 1).

Nouns:

Body Parts:

head, lip, nose, eye, neck (throat), belly (outside), skin, knee, ear, tongue, tooth, breast, hand, foot, shoulder, elbow, thumb, bone, blood

Animals:

man, woman, bird, dog, boy, girl, baby +, feather, wing, pig, cassowary, wallaby, flying fox, rat, frog, fish, egg, meat, fat of meat, louse, crocodile, turtle

Other nouns:

road, stone, firewood, smoke, sago, sun, moon, star, cloud, rain, water, tree, leaf, grass skirt, sago thatch, lime, mosquito, father, mother, older brother (of a man), name, taro, yam, banana, betel nut, axe, knife, arrow, net bag, house, earth, mountain, ocean, beach, swamp, bark (tree), seed, morning, afternoon, night, garden, green coconut

Pronouns:

I, you, he, we two (excl), you two, they two, we (excl), you (pl), they

Numbers:

one, two, three, four, five, ten

Adjectives:

good, bad, long, short, heavy (stone), light (stone), cold (water),
hot (water), old (clothing), new (clothing), black, white, all,
wet (firewood), dry (firewood), full +, big, little (small), old
(man)

Adverbs:

yesterday, tomorrow, yes, no

Verbs:

a dog bites a man, he sits, he stands, he eats sago, he sees +,
he comes, he drinks water, he sleeps, he kills, he dies, fire burns,
a bird flies, he runs, he falls down, he hits a dog, he coughs, he
laughs, he is hungry

Note: + indicates words which should be either eliminated in future or made more specific.

Items 174 to 186 on the Standard S.I.L. Wordlist were gathered in one or two villages in each language. These items are phrases and sentences designed to give a sample of the grammar. They include time words, number (of men), objects, indirect objects, negatives, and adjectives.

APPENDIX B

Sample Sociological Questionnaire and Discussion of Questions

This sociological questionnaire was developed after a workshop on Language Variation and Survey Techniques directed by Gary Simons at Ukarumpa, Eastern Highlands Province in December 1976. At this time it was pointed out that sociological information can give many clues to attitudes towards neighbouring villages and languages, and probably intelligibility. A negative attitude towards a neighbouring village may mean that the people will express difficulty in understanding them, even if they speak a linguistically close dialect.

Although there were more questions on the questionnaire than listed here some of them were rarely asked, so will not be mentioned. Questions will be presented in sections, with discussion of each set of questions following. It was found that some questions were not important for this area, although they might be for another area.

I. **MARKETS:** *Where are the markets in this area? When are they held?*

These questions are designed to find out what contact the people have with surrounding villages, and especially language groups. Other good questions to ask would be, *With whom did your ancestors trade? What did they trade?* For this area trade did not seem to be very important.

II. **SINGSINGS:** *When you have a singsing who comes? Do you go to singsings in other places? With whom did your ancestors have singsings?*

We found it best to begin with the question of ancestors' singsings first, as some people were reluctant to admit that they still had singsings. Another alternative would be to use the term 'party', as they may be more common now in some areas than the traditional singsings.

III. ENEMIES: *Who were your ancestors's enemies?*

Here it is important to stress 'ancestors' so that the person does not feel defensive about their present attitudes toward their 'ancestors' enemies'. Men are more likely to give a response to this question than women.

IV. SCHOOL: *Where do your children go to school? How many go from this village? How many years do they go to school?*

These questions are designed to evaluate the educational level of the people. They are an indication of outside contact and initiative. If there are people with higher education these will be mentioned proudly by them.

V. GEOGRAPHIC: *What are the three closest villages? How long a walk is it to these?*

These were collected to compare distances according to the map with attitudes about distance. A friendly neighbouring village will be considered to be 'close' regardless of the distance. On the other hand, enemies will be a 'long' distance despite possible geographic proximity.

VI. MARRIAGE: (1) *Where were you born? Where was your spouse/mother/father born?* (2) *From where do the men here get their wives? How many have come from each of these places?* (3) *Where do the women in this village go as wives? How many have gone to each of these villages?*

The first two questions were intended as census type data, to find out from one or more persons specific information. Sometimes this shows up interesting relationships with other villages which are not mentioned in question sets two or three. These questions show up patterns of exchange of wives: what the direction of flow is, by an indication of relative numbers. For example, in the village of Tring, ten wives were said to come from Wau and none went there.

VII. SOCIOLINGUISTICS: *What is the name of your language? Who (which villages) speak this language? Who speaks a little differently? Are you able to understand and reply? What other languages are around here? Are you able to understand these? If so - are you able to reply?*

The focus here is to determine whom they consider speak exactly the same as themselves, and whom they consider speak somewhat differently. We found that when we asked in the first village of a language, we got a rather general response. But once we had asked questions in a couple of villages, we seemed to get more specific information. Generally we

found concurrence between villages as to who spoke exactly the same, who spoke somewhat differently, and who spoke very differently. The village of Mandi was the only one in which different people said that the village belonged to different languages. This may be because the village is a mixture of two languages living together.

If the people did not volunteer other languages that were around them, we suggested nearby villages which we thought might be a different language. We found it best to ask men questions about other languages, and especially if they can understand them, as they are more likely to have outside contact than woman. This can give an idea of the prestigious language, if there is a large amount of bilingualism in one direction. We found claim to mutual understanding in both directions by some villages where women from different languages had intermarried.

There are some questions which we did not ask regularly, but which could be helpful:

1. What villages are included in the local council? Where is the council located?

This gives an idea of the structure of the local government, and which villages may have more prestige by having the presence of the council.

2. Where did your ancestors come from? Where did the people in this village come from originally?

We found that there were places where people just told us where the village had come from, and this was helpful in checking hypotheses about historical migrations. The lexicostatistics usually confirmed their origin story, so we feel it would be valuable to include these queries more systematically.

3. Where are your gardens?

This question would confirm data collected in number two above, as a recent movement of a village to a new site could mean that their gardens are quite a distance. This is the case with Yaugiba who moved onto Kamasau land after World War II. Their gardens are still located near Namareb, their ancestral location.

APPENDIX C

Typological Features - Actor Pronouns and Verb Prefixes

	Actor Pronouns				Verb Prefixes		
	singular	dual	plural		singular	dual	plural
Buna	na no din un	na nu nun in	nam(bu) nu(m) nun in	1 2 3masc 3fem	k- kw- n- k/w-	b- kw- m- k-	b- kw- m- k-
Bungain	na nu ni wi	na(we) nu(wi) mi(ye)	na(yip) nu(yip) mi(yip)	1 2 3masc 3fem	k- y/kw- n- w-	b- w- m- s-	p- w- m- s-
Kamasau	ne nu ni ni		begi nu ni ni	1 2 3masc 3fem	k- y/kw- n- w-	p- w- m- r-	p- w- m- r-
Mandi	nak nok na(k) wo(k)	nau nu ma ko	nam nom mak kok	1 2 3masc 3fem	n- w-		
Muniwara	nak nok na (k)wo	na nu man kwo	nam nom mak kwo	1 2 3masc 3fem	ø ø n- w-	m- m- m- k-	p- p- m- k-
Elepi	na nu			1 2 3masc 3fem	n- ø n- w-	b- m- m- w-	b- m- m- w-
Urimo	yi nu ni ni		ibem nu ni ni	1 2 3masc 3fem	k- k- n- w-	p- w- m- r-	w- w- m- r-

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