

## 2.10.2. WEST PAPUAN PHYLUM LANGUAGES ON THE MAINLAND OF NEW GUINEA: BIRD'S HEAD (VOGELKOP) PENINSULA

C.L. Voorhoeve

### 2.10.2.1. INTRODUCTION

The original set-up of this section was to give a survey of the languages of the West Papuan Phylum located on the mainland of New Guinea and on Yapen Island in much the same way as this has been done for the languages of the Trans-New Guinea Phylum in 2.6.2.2. in this volume. Recent research by the present writer however has made it clear that the languages along the south coast of the Bird's Head and in the western part of the Bomberai Peninsula belong to the Trans-New Guinea Phylum and not to the West Papuan Phylum as posited by Cowan (see 2.6.2.3.). It further became clear that if the West Papuan Phylum was interpreted as a phylum in the lexicostatistical sense, several languages had to be dropped from it.<sup>1</sup> These are the Meax, Meningo and Mantion languages in the eastern phylum (see 2.14.3.1.), and the Yava language on Yapen which is a member of the Geelvink Bay Phylum (see 2.14.3.2.). The remaining languages of the old West Papuan Phylum on the mainland<sup>2</sup> seem to lexicostatistically form a phylum, and it is to these languages that the name West Papuan Phylum will here be restricted.

Very little is known in detail about the languages of the West Papuan Phylum. The present survey is based on Cowan's survey of 1953 supplemented by lexical materials from Anceaux' notebooks<sup>3</sup> and the few notes on the Brat language by Elmberg (1955). General information on the languages of the phylum and short comparative word lists can be found in Voorhoeve 1975.

The West Papuan Phylum consists of one super-stock (for the definition of this term see 2.2.5. in this volume) and two stock-level

families. The super-stock is the Bird's Head Super-Stock; the two stock-level families are the Amberbaken Family and the Borai-Hattam Family. The last mentioned family has only been tentatively included as a member of the West Papuan Phylum, and has therefore been given sub-phylic status.

For a map of these families see the Family Map included with 2.6.2. in this volume (see 2.6.2.1.).

#### 2.10.2.2. THE BIRD'S HEAD SUPER-STOCK

2.10.2.2.0. This super-stock is made up of three language families, the West Bird's Head Family, the North Bird's Head Family, and the Central Bird's Head Family. The North and the Central Bird's Head Families together form the Central Bird's Head Stock. The inter-family cognation percentages, ranging from 12 to 15%, are near the lower limit of stock-level relationships. The West Bird's Head Family has cognation percentages averaging 10% with the other two families. Individual percentages range from 6 to 15%, and the three families together seem to form a group on an intermediate level between stock and phylum.

##### 2.10.2.2.1. THE WEST BIRD'S HEAD FAMILY

The family occupies the western part of the Bird's Head as well as the eastern part of the island of Salawati opposite the Bird's Head's western shore. There are six member languages: Kuwani, Tehit, Kalabra, Seget, Moi, and Moraid. The total number of speakers is estimated at 15,000; no figures are available for the individual languages.

Some grammatical notes and general information on Moi, Moraid, and Kalabra can be found in Cowan's survey; further lexical data in these languages appeared in his later comparative work (1957, 1958, 1960, and 1963). Galis 1955 contains short word lists in Kalabra, Moi, and Moraid, and Wurm 1971 gives a first tentative classification of these languages as a family.

Kuwani is known through only one word list; the exact location of the language is not known, but judging from its vocabulary it should be in the south-eastern corner of the family's territory, near the phylum border with Konda. Kuwani shares more than 50% cognates with Kalabra and Tehit; together they form a subgroup within the family.

Tehit is spoken in the interior north of Konda in at least eight villages. There is no information on dialects.

Kalabra is spoken in the coastal area to the west of Konda.

Seget is spoken in the westernmost tip of the Bird's Head. It has obviously been influenced by its north-eastern neighbour Moi with which it shares about 50% cognates, whereas the percentages with the other members of the family lie around the family-stock level border (25% with Moraid, 28% with Kuwani, 30% with Tehit, and 34% with Kalabra).

Moi is spoken in nearly the whole north-western half of the family's territory, including the south-eastern side of Salawati Island. On Salawati, two dialects are spoken, Waipu in Waipu village, and Mosana in the villages Waliam and Yefbo. The dialect situation on the mainland is unknown. Moi shares between 35-40% cognates with Moraid, Tehit, Kalabra, and Kuwani.

Moraid is spoken in the interior east of Moi, and north of Kalabra and Tehit. It shares 50% cognates with Kalabra, 45% with Kuwani, and 30% with Tehit. Moraid is aberrant in that its cognation percentages with the languages of the south Bird's Head Sub Phylum (Trans-New Guinea Phylum) are generally higher than those of its fellow family-members whereas its cognation percentages with the languages of the Central Bird's Head Family and with Amberbaken are lower.

The languages of the family have personal pronouns in three persons, singular and plural. Tehit, Kalabra and Moraid have inclusive and exclusive forms in the 1st person plural. Characteristic for the 1st and 2nd person singular pronouns are the initial consonants t- and n- respectively.

	Kuwani	Tehit	Kalabra	Seget	Moi	Moraid
1 p.s.	tetike	tet	tet	tet	tit	tit
1 p.pl. in.	?	faf	titareno	mam	mam; pa	tebok
ex.	?	mam	wawehin- kapeda			papetebo
2 p.s.	?	nen	nin	nen	nin	nagumere
2 p.pl.	?	nan	namano-nin	nan	nan	metobou
3 p.s.	?	wow	namano	gao	wa <sup>4</sup>	nik
3 p.pl.	?	naneke <sup>5</sup>	norok	kwagay	mieja <sup>6</sup>	mona

The verb in these languages takes prefixed subject markers. Imperative markers follow the verb stem, but probably are separate particles, not suffixes. Some of the verb forms noted seem to

contain suffixes, but their function could not be identified. Some examples: *eat*, Tehit: n-atni, t-atni (with prefixed subject markers n- (2nd p.s.?) and t- (1st p.s.?) and probable suffix -ni); Kalabra n-at-kalen. Imperative forms in Moi: dahok-se *swim*; n-um-se *cry*; leve-se *see*. This *se* could be a separate particle since it can be separated from the verb stem by the object which in these languages follows the verb. Thus, the word order in the verbal sentence--at least in the very few examples reported--is Austronesian: (S)-V-O. Examples: Moi n-arik sagusu matu *chop its head off* (matu seems to be a hortative particle); Moraid n-ala-no m-sawag, Kalabra n-ala u-safas *chop its head off* (m- and u- are possessive prefixes 3rd p.s.); Moraid n-ju garawag *se fry the fish!*.

#### 2.10.2.2.2. THE CENTRAL BIRD'S HEAD STOCK

##### 2.10.2.2.2.1. The North Bird's Head Family

This family stretches over the western part of the Tamrau mountains in the north Bird's Head, and along a considerable part of the north coast. There are two member languages, Karon Pantai along the north coast, and Madik in the interior. The total number of speakers is likely to exceed 5,000; figures for the individual languages are not available.

Some notes on Karon and Madik have been published by Cowan (1953) and some lexical data appeared in his later publications (1957, 1958, 1960, and 1963). A tentative classification of the languages was given by Wurm (1971).

The pronouns in Karon and Madik are:

	Karon	Madik
1 p.s.	tat, yat, ji <sup>7</sup>	ji
1 p.pl.	men	men, mum <sup>7</sup>
2 p.s.	nan	nan
2 p.pl.	nin, nun <sup>7</sup>	nun
3 p.s.	ne, an, yetu <sup>7</sup>	yetetu, yaome <sup>7</sup>
2 p.pl.	yetu, an, anath <sup>7</sup>	letatu, yaome <sup>7</sup>

The pronouns of the 1st and 2nd person are similar to those in the languages of the West Bird's Head Family. In Karon, possessive prefixes t- (1st p.s.) and n- (2nd p.s.) have been noted with kinship terms: *tabai my father*; *nambai your father*.

Verbs: There is evidence that subject markers are prefixed to the verb stem. The imperative marker *su* in Karon is a separate particle following the verb, as in Moraid *se*.

Examples: *Come!* Karon *ma su!* Madik *na-ma*; *Sit!* Madik *na-ti!*  
Karon *mə-ti* [= *let's sit down (?)*]; *Speak!* Madik *na-tam suk*, Karon *na-ski su*.

Work order in the verbal sentence follows the Austronesian pattern:  
Karon *uŋwa kue su*, Madik *umbah kui fell (the) tree!*

#### 2.10.2.2.2.2. The Central Bird's Head Family

The Central Bird's Head Family occupies a large area in the interior of the Bird's Head, from the Tamrau Mountains in the north to the southern coastal plain. There are two member languages, Karon Dori and Brat. Karon Dori is spoken by about 5,000 people living in the Tamrau Mountains. Brat, with over 15,000 speakers, centres round the Ayamaru Lakes. The two languages are closely related, sharing 80% cognates.

Brat is reported to be spoken in nine dialects (Elmberg 1955). In earlier literature the names Ayamaru, Aitinyo, Mogetemin, and Meybrat have been used to refer to the Brat language.

Some grammatical notes on Brat can be found in Cowan 1953 and in Elmberg 1955. Some lexical data appeared in Cowan 1957, 1958, 1960, and 1963.

The pronouns in Brat and Karon Dori are:

	Brat	Karon Dori
1 p.s.	tio, co, jio <sup>8</sup>	tuo
1 p.pl.	anu, amu <sup>8</sup>	anu(fe)
2 p.s.	nio	nuo
2 p.pl.	anu(ta)	anu(beta)
3 p.s.(masc)	ait	ait, aik <sup>8</sup>
(fem)	au	?
3 p.l.	ana(weto), <sup>8</sup> ra(weto)	raim, raino, rena, <sup>8</sup> anata

The system is similar to the pronominal systems of the West Bird's Head and North Bird's Head Families. Here too, the characteristic consonants of the 1st and 2nd p.s. pronouns are t (c, j) and n. The corresponding possessive prefixes are t-, n-. Elmberg gives the following series: t-aja *my father*, n-aja *your father*, γ-aja *his father*, m-aja *her, their father*, n-ōja *our, your (pl) father*.

Nouns denoting human beings can take a pluralizing suffix *-na*:  
*tio t-aja-na my (classificatory) fathers.*

Verbs take prefixed subject markers; these show in Cowan's data only a distinction between 1 p.s., 3 p.s., and the rest (but 3 p.pl. forms are lacking in the data): *I am speaking* etc. Brat: *tio tegias, ait yegias, nio/amu/anu negias.* Elmberg gives a similar paradigm for the verb *to whistle* and a more elaborate one for *to die*; *tio t-xabo, ait y-xabo, nio/amu/anu/ana n-xabo I am whistling* etc.; *tio te-xai, nio/amu ne-xai, ait ye-xai, au/ana me-xai, anu bö-xai I am dying* etc. (the last form is 2nd p.pl.). Elmberg further mentions an 'infinitive' form marked by *ne-*, a 'participial' form marked by *ma-*, and a completive aspect form marked by a suffix *-ox*. Cowan's data contains an intended action form with a suffix *-bo*. Thus, verbs in Brat take prefixes as well as suffixes. There are no data on the verb structure of Karon Dori.

The few examples of sentences in Cowan and Elmberg show an Austronesian word order and prepositions instead of postpositions: *tio tegias-bo ka nio I want to talk to you; ne ke tio give (it) to me; tio temo nepam maru I'm going from the lake; nagus syox fry (the) fish.*

### 2.10.2.3. THE AMBERBAKEN STOCK-LEVEL FAMILY

The Amberbaken Family occupies the area between the north-western border of the Central Bird's Head Family and the north coast. In the west it borders on Karon Pantai, in the east on Meax. There are two member languages, Amberbaken in the north-west of the region, and Kebar in the south-east. They are closely related, perhaps even to the extent that they could be considered dialects of one language, but the only available word list in Kebar is too short to draw firm conclusions. The total number of speakers is more than 5,000. Published data are restricted to Amberbaken; a few vocabulary items in this language can be found in Galis 1955 and in Cowan 1958.

The pronouns in Amberbaken are:

1 p.s.	in	2 p.s.	nan	3 p.s.(masc)	yeta
				(fem)	(y)en
1 p.pl.	in, (y)ek	2 p.pl.	nen	3 p.pl.	yeta atitin

The 2nd person pronouns follow the pattern common to all the languages of the Bird's Head Super-Stock; the 3rd person pronouns resemble most closely those of Karon Pantai and Madik, and to a lesser degree those of Brat with which they share the features of gender

distinction within the 3rd p.s. The 1st person pronoun forms are restricted to this family, as they lack the characteristic alveodental stop in the singular and the bilabial nasal in the plural form, both common to the languages of the Super-Stock.

What little there can be said about the verb in Amberbaken is that it takes prefixes, presumably subject markers, but these have not been entered in the word lists. A few of the verb forms noted contain possible prefixes, *he-*, *n-*, *an-*, *aŋ-*: *hesakwen see*, *heinau stand*, *henu walk*, *hetapereke cry*, *an-una come*, *andet eat*, *aŋweba speak*, *aŋnot see*.

Structurally, Amberbaken seems to tie in closely with the languages of the super-stock; on the lexical level however the ties are weak. Amberbaken shares an average of 12% cognates with the neighbouring Brat and Karon Dori languages, but this percentage is most likely inflated by borrowing. The cognation percentages shared with other languages of the super-stock are much lower: an average of 6% with those of the West Bird's Head Family, and 5% with Madik and Karon Pantai. With the Borai and Hattam languages the average cognation percentage is 7%.

On the other hand, Amberbaken shares 6% cognates with Yava, a language which has maximally 3% cognates with the languages of the super-stock and has a completely different set of pronouns, although its verb morphology is also prefixing. Yava also has an unexpectedly high number of cognates with a few other languages along the north coast of New Guinea, i.e. with Borai and Hattam of the West Papuan Phylum and with the languages of the Sentani Stock (Trans-New Guinea Phylum) (see 2.14.3.2.2.). It is possible that these percentages reflect a contact of some sort between Yava and these coastal languages, but at present it is impossible to determine the true nature of their relationships because of the paucity of data.

#### 2.10.2.4. THE BORAI-HATTAM SUB-PHYLUM LEVEL FAMILY

The Borai-Hattam Family is found in the north-east corner of the Bird's Head where it constitutes a deep wedge between the Meax and Mantion languages of the East Bird's Head phylum-level Stock (2.14.3.1.). There are two member languages, Borai and Hattam. Borai is spoken in a few coastal villages immediately south of the township of Manokwari. It is surrounded by Hattam which occupies the rest of the family's territory. The total number of speakers exceeds 9,000. There are no published materials in Borai or Hattam; the present writer used word lists kindly made available to him by J.C. Anceaux.

The personal pronouns in Borai and Hattam are:

	Borai	Hattam
1 p.s.	dan	dani
1 p.pl. in.	niwab	mieni
ex.	ŋian	nieni
2 p.s.	nan	nani
2 p.pl.	sien(a)	ceni
3 p.s.	ne, niu	no, noni
3 p.pl.	natenoto	tenoto, teto

The first and second person singular pronouns tie in closely with those of the Bird's Head Super-Stock languages; the set as a whole is most similar to the pronoun sets of Karon and Madik. Verbs in Borai and Hattam take prefixes, presumably subject markers.

The Borai-Hattam Family presents the same problem as Amberbaken with regard to its relationships with Yava. While the structural data link it with the Bird's Head Super-Stock, the lexical data are strongly in favour of a link with Yava. Cognation percentages with the Super-Stock languages and with Amberbaken range from 4 to 7%; between Yava and Borai we find seven cognates, two of which are verbs, and between Hattam and Yava ten cognates, six of which are verbs. However, cognation percentages with the other languages of the Geelvink Bay Phylum (Tarunggare, Baropasi, Bauri, see 2.14.3.2.) range from 1 to 4% only. Since the lexical affinities between Borai and Yava possibly reflect a borrowing relationship, less weight has been given to these than to the structural affinities which tie Borai and Hattam in with the West Papuan Phylum. The status of the family as a member of the West Papuan Phylum however will remain uncertain until more data have become available, and in view of this, it has, for the time being, been given sub-phylic status within the phylum.



2.10.2. THE WEST PAPUAN PHYLUM: VOGELKOP PENINSULA

N O T E S

1. Cowan's use of the term phylum did not imply any particular level of lexicostatistical relationship; for him, the term indicated a group of languages which were possibly remotely related since they showed more-than-chance lexical correspondences (see for instance Cowan 1958). To define subgroups in his West Papuan Phylum, he used structural criteria: prefixing versus suffixing verb morphology, and similarities in pronominal systems.

The Trans-New Guinea Phylum, as originally proposed, also did not imply any particular lexicostatistical level of relationship (McElhanon-Voorhoeve 1970:102 footnote). The possibility that the Trans-New Guinea Phylum was also lexicostatistically a phylum was left open by the authors. This seems now to be true for the majority of the languages for which Trans-New Guinea Phylum membership has been claimed.

2. Whether the Papuan languages of North Halmahera also belong to the lexicostatistically redefined West Papuan Phylum remains to be investigated; the possibility that the Papuan languages of Timor and Alor belong to the Trans-New Guinea Phylum has already been discussed in 2.10.1.1.1.5. and in 2.5.3.3.2. and 2.5.4.2.1.

3. See 2.6.2.1. in this volume.

4. Different forms in different word lists. Also: nayanji, anio, zinen.

5. Different forms in different word lists. Also: iit, ieteke, nahrakomona, ventanai, wou, weteke.

6. Different forms in different lists. Also: nayanji, meanie, meyeanjidik.
7. Forms from different word lists, probably representing dialect differences.
8. Forms from different lists, probably representing different dialects.

2.10.2. THE WEST PAPUAN PHYLUM: VOGELKOP PENINSULA

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