



# POLYNESIAN LANGUAGES

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**Language Names:** There are about 30 distinct Polynesian languages comprised of about 60 named languages and dialects. All are named after the island or island group where they are found except for Maori, the language of Polynesians native to New Zealand, and Mooriiori, the (extinct) language of the Chatham Islands off New Zealand.

Those for which at least some linguistic data are available are: Aitutaki (East Polynesian, Southern Cooks), Aniwa (Outlier, Southern Vanuatu), Anuta (Outlier, Solomon Islands, Santa Cruz area), Atiu (East Polynesian, Southern Cooks), East Futuna (Western Polynesian), East Uvea (Western Polynesian), Easter Island (see Rapanui), Ellice Islands (see Tuvalu), Futuna (see: East Futuna and West Futuna), Hawaii (East Polynesian), Kapingamarangi (Outlier, Micronesia), Luangiua (Ongtong Java) (Outlier, Solomon Islands, some distance north of the center of the chain), Mae (Outlier, Central Vanuatu), Manihiki-Rakahanga (East Polynesian, Northern Cooks), Maori (East Polynesian, New Zealand), Mele-Fila (Outlier, Central Vanuatu), Mangaia (East Polynesian, Southern Cooks), Mitiaro (East Polynesian, Southern Cooks), Mauke (East Polynesian, Southern Cooks), Mooriiori (East Polynesian off New Zealand, Chatham Islands), Marquesas (East Polynesian, dialects: Northern and Southern), Mangareva (East Polynesian, southeast of Tuamotus), Mele-Fila (Outlier, central Vanuatu), Nanumea (Western Polynesian, Tuvalu), Niufo'ou (Western Polynesian), Niuatoputapu (Western Polynesian, a language of the Samoan type in the early historical period but then replaced by Tongan prior to substantial documentation), Niue (Western Polynesian), Nukuria (Outlier, Solomon Islands, north of Bougainville), Nukumanu (Outlier, Solomon Islands, some distance north of the center of the Solomon chain), Nukuoro (Outlier, Micronesia), Ongtong Java (see Luangiua), Paumotu (see Tuamotu), Pileni (Outlier, Santa Cruz area), Pukapuka (East Polynesian, Northern Cooks), Rakahanga (see Manihiki), Rapa (East Polynesian, Australs), Rapanui (East Polynesian), Rarotonga (East Polynesian, Southern Cooks), Rennell and Bellona (Outlier, Solomon Islands), Rangiroa (Northern Tuamotus), Rurutu (East Polynesian, Australs), Samoa (Western Polynesian), Sikaiana (Outlier, Solomon Islands, some distance north of the southeastern tip of the chain), Tahiti (East Polynesian), Takuu (Outlier, Solomon Islands, some distance north of the main northwestern islands of the chain), Taumako (Outlier, Solomon Islands, Santa Cruz area), Tikopia (Outlier, Santa Cruz area), Tokelau (Western Polynesian), Tonga (Western Polynesian), Tongareva (East Polynesian, Northern Cooks), Tuamotu (East Polynesian, numerous islands and dialects), Tubuai (East Polynesian, Australs), Tuvalu (Western Polynesian, formerly the "Ellice Islands"; better described dialects: Nanumea, Vaitapu), Uvea (see: East Uvea and West Uvea), Vaitupu (Western Polynesian, Tuvalu), Wallis Island (see East Uvea), West Futuna (Outlier, Southern Vanuatu), West Uvea (Outlier, New Caledonia, Loyalty Islands),

**Location:** All the languages found within the "Polynesian Triangle," defined by Hawaii, New Zealand and Rapanui, are of the same family of Oceanic Austronesian, thus the name for the group. Polynesian languages (the "Polynesian Outliers") are also found scattered on small islands from southernmost Melanesia (West Uvea in the Loyalty Islands north of New Caledonia), up through Vanuatu, off the Santa Cruz Islands, among the small islands north of the main Solomon Islands and into south central Micronesia (Nukuoro and Kapingamarangi).

**Family:** Austronesian.

**Related Languages:** The Oceanic subgroup of Eastern Malayo-Polynesian. Most immediately related to Fijian and Rotuman, these languages together may have originally emerged out of Northern Vanuatu but the relationship is not well marked by shared innovations.

**Dialects:** Islands separated from others by more than a single night's voyaging in traditional craft have, in most instances, developed such distinctions as to be beyond the language limit with their neighbors. East Uvean, East Futuna, the Outliers, the Tokelaus and the Southern Cooks (versus Tahiti and the Societies) follow this pattern, and Tongarevan versus Manihiki-Rakahangan in the Northern Cooks may follow this pattern as well. Dialects exist(ed) for those languages spread over archipelagoes consisting of islands less than a day's voyaging apart: Tuvalu (Ellice Islands: northern and southern dialects); Samoan (Manu'a versus Savai'i), New Zealand Maori (North Island and South Island (now extinct), and numerous dialects internal to North Island: a general East-West division and local subdialects: Bay of Plenty, Taranaki-Wanganui, North Auckland); Marquesan (well marked Northern and Southern dialects); the Tuamotus (dozens of inhabited atolls, probably very distinct when comparing the furthest northwest to the furthest southeast but not well described and being replaced, from northwest to southeast by Neo-Tahitian); and Hawaiian (one of the most recently settled Polynesian Islands whose dialects were not well marked (and not well described before becoming extinct). Dialects are not reported for Tongan and a highly unified language apparently extends through the whole archipelago which lies at a convenient angle to the prevailing winds (and through which easy voyaging to all destinations within the archipelago is possible through most of the year).

**Number of Speakers:** Recent census information is available for few of the islands and groups and those censuses which have been taken have not always reported on language use. In most instances there are significant numbers of speakers in other Polynesian or Pacific rim localities, especially Marquesans in Tahiti, Cook Islanders in New Zealand, Samoans in New Zealand and California, and so on. From east to west: 2,645 Rapanui people were counted in 1986, 1,717 of whom lived on Rapanui. Not all were able to speak the language. Presently the number of speakers is about 2,000. While the language is in daily use by adults, this is not so true of children who communicate with each other in Chilean Spanish. In 1988 there were 4,557 people living in the Northern Marquesas and 2,801 in the Southern Marquesas, the great majority of both were native speakers. In that same year, 620 people were counted on Mangareva and 11,173 in the Tuamotus. Mangerevans and southeast Tuamotuans have continued using their traditional languages but, from the northwest Tuamotus, Neo-Tahitian is encroaching towards the others. Also in 1988, 6,509 people were counted on the Austral Islands as were 162,573 for the Societies, 140,069 of those living on Tahiti and its immediate neighbors, 22,232 living on the "leeward" islands: Ra'iatea and its immediate neighbors. About 115,000 of the people enumerated in the Societies identified themselves as native Tahitians and 80 percent of those were speakers of Tahitian. The population of the Cooks was 18,128 in 1983, the vast majority were native Cook Islanders and speakers of one or more of the "Cook Maori" dialects. There are presently over 250,000 native Hawaiians in Hawaii and another 100,000 living elsewhere, only a few hundred of whom speak Hawaiian. Western Samoans numbered about 160,000 in the late 1980s while American Samoa had a population of about 34,000 in those years. The 1991 Tokelau census enumerated 1,538 people and a 1979 census of Tuvalu found 5,887 persons, most native speakers in both instances. A 1976 census of Tonga found 90,085 persons. Estimates of population about ten years later put 100,000 people in Tonga itself and about 30,000 Tongans in other localities, particularly New Zealand, Australia, the United States, Samoa, and Fiji. There are some hundreds of thousands of New Zealanders of Maori extraction but fewer than 30,000 speakers of Maori remain, most of them over fifty years old. The Outliers are generally single islands or atolls and commonly support populations of only a few hundred, although some of the "Futunic" Outliers are small volcanic peaks or good sized raised coral formations and can support populations closer to a thousand. Although individual Outlier islands have very few people, they are typically all or nearly all active speakers of the traditional language. The typical Polynesian age pyramid resembles a low mountain (because of the large family size) and population doubles about every 25 years. So estimates of populations above that are dated may reflect only 50 to 70 per cent of the number of native speakers today. Migration streams from the small islands to larger ones and from larger islands to metropolitan centers reduce native speakers in residence on any given island. Hawaii and New Zealand are exceptions: family size is smaller but the general social and language use contexts are atypical.

## Origin and History

Fiji and Western Polynesia were first settled by people more or less at once at a time archaeologists now put at about 850 B.C. The "synthetic" model of prehistory for the area, a result of archaeological, linguistic, human genetic, ethno-botanic, and other evidence, attributes the appearance of people at that time to speakers of Oceanic Austronesian. They arrived as part of the emergence into Oceania of seafaring Austronesian speaking horticulturalists who had earlier established themselves in Western and then Eastern Melanesia, having come to Western Melanesia from Eastern Indonesia.

Populations grew slowly around Fiji and Western Polynesia and more or less intense social contacts between Fiji and Western Polynesia centered in the large islands of Tonga and Samoa are implied by innovations shared between Fijian and Polynesian during the early period of settlement. The period of common development between Fijian and Polynesian was short relative to the common development of Tongan, Samoan and other Western Polynesian speech. About a thousand years of cohesive Polynesian linguistic and cultural development largely distinct from other Oceanic is implied by the massive innovations of Polynesian language and culture as compared to Fijian and other Oceanic. Social contacts with Fiji can be assumed through that period because of the short distance and demonstrable loanwords, but Tonga and Samoa lie in a more favorable relationship to the main seasonal winds and the sea between them was a regular highway for social and linguistic

continuities. Contacts with Fiji were more difficult and the period of linguistic unity between Polynesia and eastern Fiji (the Laus in particular) apparently broke down a few centuries after settlement.

By the early first millennium A.D., perhaps by about A.D. 250, there were substantial local populations in the Tongan and Samoan archipelagoes and the period of shared linguistic innovations seems to have ceased. The disintegration of a continuous language between the two groups would appear to have been due to a declining ratio of internal (within Western Polynesia) migrants as a portion of overall population, because of a decline in absolute numbers of internal migrants or both. The islands of East Polynesia were settled at about this time by people speaking the progenitor language of modern East Polynesian languages. Some centuries of common development ensued in the east, the resulting language being Proto East Polynesian, which carried a predominance of specifically Samoan rather than Tongan innovations, marking the main source of its origin. The Outliers were also settled by people speaking languages marked by innovations originating in the Samoa area rather than Tonga. Thus the genetic grouping of Polynesian languages has languages other than Tongan (and Niuean) in a subgroup called "Nuclear Polynesian" and Tongan and Niuean in another first order group called "Tongic". Outlier languages from Santa Cruz south ("Futunic" Outliers) seem to have come from East Futuna and/or East Uvean (both just west of Samoa) and Outliers west and northwest of Santa Cruz ("Ellicean" Outliers) seem to have come from Tuvalu (north-

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west of Samoa, the former Ellice Islands), Tuvaluan having previously emerged specifically from Samoan. Linguistic phylogeny suggests the Futunic Outliers were settled at about the same time as East Polynesia and the Ellicean Outliers slightly later. However, the archaeology of the Outliers presently shows dates for Polynesian material culture in the Outliers only from many hundreds of years later.

East Polynesian linguistic dispersals began with the divergence of Rapanui (Easter Island) speech some hundreds of years after the establishment of a uniquely “East Polynesian” linguistic community. The archaeology is controversial and the linguist can only guess but settlement of Rapanui at about AD 500 is implied by the general linguistic and archaeological relations of East Polynesian. Other East Polynesian languages, called “Central East Polynesian,” continued their common development for some hundreds of years and then developed varieties centered in the Marquesas (“Marquesic”), from which Hawaiian emerged in the late first millennium A.D.; and Tahiti (“Tahitic”), from which New Zealand Maori emerged in the early second millennium A.D. Some time after the divergence of Hawaiian, Mangarevan diverged from Marquesan. The speech of the Tuamotus and Cooks appears to have diverged from Tahitian after the divergence of New Zealand Maori, probably resulting from the gradual growth of population through the area and a declining ratio of internal migrants to total population in a manner similar to the disintegration of early Tongan and Samoan as a continuous language. This type of slow end to linguistic sharing through an area after settlement has been termed “network breaking” (with diminishing linguistic impact of internal migration) in the Oceanic context as contrasted with the relatively abrupt language splits of “radiation” (stream migration to a distant place and early isolation of speech after initial settlement).

East Polynesian languages are quite similar to one another and East Polynesians find it remarkable how much they understand of East Polynesian languages other than their own. But internal divergences began over a thousand years ago; isolation was often profound and the major languages of Rapanui, Marquesan, Tahitian, Hawaiian, and New Zealand Maori are not mutually intelligible for practical purposes. They, for instance, only score about 50 percent with each other on the 200-word lexicostatistical list. Tongan and Samoan score in the same range, about 50 percent on the 200-word list, and are not mutually intelligible. East Uvean, west of Samoa, is more or less mutually intelligible with Tongan but this is because of massive Tongan loanwords in East Uvean which occurred all at once in the late prehistoric period and overlaid deeper historical connections having more to do with Samoan.

#### Orthography and Basic Phonology

Proto Polynesian and all its daughters had/have five vowels of the Latin type. Vowel length was/is phonemic and long vowels occur/red in all the languages and protolanguages. There were 13 Proto Polynesian consonants (see Table 1 below).

Proto Tongic had lost Proto Polynesian \**r* and merged \**s* and \**h* as Proto Tongic \**h*. Proto Nuclear Polynesian had lost Proto Polynesian \**h* and merged \**r* and \**l* as Proto Nuclear Polynesian \**l*. Most Nuclear Polynesian languages have lost

the Proto Polynesian glottal stop and many East Polynesian languages are characterized by further reductions because of mergers, for example, Hawaiian of \**n* and \**ng* to *n*, Tahitian of \**k* and \**ng* to glottal stop, and a general tendency in East Polynesian to merge \**f* and \**s* as *h*. Proto Polynesian \**k* has commonly become glottal stop in Samoan, Luangiua, Tahitian, Southern Marquesan, and Hawaiian; \**t* has commonly become *k* in Colloquial Samoan, Luangiua, and Hawaiian; \**s* has often become *h* in Tongic, East Uvean, some Outliers and, mainly independently of one another, all but one East Polynesian language; and \**h* has in several instances become glottal stop in Mangarevan and Austral Island dialects, and some Southern Cook Island dialects.

**Table 1: Consonants**

	Labial	Apical	Velar	Glottal
Stops	p	t	k	q
Fricatives	f	s		h
Nasals	m	n	ng	
Trill/Flap		r		
Liquid		l		
Glide	w			

Polynesian vowels are primarily stressed penultimately, and secondarily every second vowel towards the beginning of the word working back from the penultimate vowel. Vowels may occur in diphthongs or longer sequences uninterrupted by consonants, for example, Hawaiian *uai* ‘to move, as an object’ and Tahitian *aie* ‘plant sp.’, but Proto Polynesian had no consonant clusters nor do any of the living languages other than in the instance of certain Outliers which have developed clusters through vowel deletion. All words end in vowels.

No living Polynesian language has productive morphophonemic assimilatory processes and none can be attributed to any of the Polynesian protolanguages back to Proto Polynesian itself. Diachronically, assimilation of unstressed or secondarily stressed low vowels to following high vowels is important in the history of Tongic and Nuclear Marquesic (Marquesan and Mangarevan). Marquesan, and other languages more sporadically, has regularly raised \**a* to *e* where *-(C)CV#* followed, for example, Proto Polynesian \**mataku* > Marquesan *meta’u* ‘afraid’. Another common outcome, especially in Nuclear Polynesian, for words of that form is lengthening to *-(C)aaCa(C)V#*. Kapingamarangi has assimilated large numbers of word final vowels to preceding vowels, like Proto Polynesian \**malo* > Kapingamarangi *mala* ‘loin garment’. Otherwise, living Polynesian languages tend to faithfully follow the Proto Polynesian pattern except for sporadic changes, mainly assimilations, some of which mark the various subgroups.

Orthographic conventions are normally simple. Linguists have long represented the glottal stop as “\*q” for the protolanguages and with an apostrophe in the living languages. East Polynesians are often indifferent to its representation in their own, even official, writing and are less inclined to mark vowel length than in Tonga or Samoa. The velar nasal is variously represented as *g* and *ng*. Other sounds have English

equivalents and are spelled with single letters as seen above in the Proto Polynesian consonant chart. No living Polynesian language has any sound not found in Proto Polynesian with the exception of some non-phonemic voicing of the stops in some Outliers (and their spelling as voiced rather than voiceless in Nukuoro) and the presence of an affricate “*j*” in West Futuna-Aniwa and “*ts*” in Niuean. Tongan recently had an affricate, (e.g. *Fiji*, the Tongan pronunciation in the early historic period) but it became [s] before the language was much recorded.

## Basic Morphology

Polynesian languages are isolating rather than agglutinative, especially so the East Polynesian subgroup. Few grammatical morphemes are bound and those that are generally consist of small sets of verbal prefixes marking such things as continuity, causation, plurality of events, capability, and plurality of patients. Verbal suffixes are relatively rare and generally change the case frame of the verb. The main causative prefix is very productive in all Polynesian languages and commonly the source of pages of distinct words, many with their own idioms and other special usages in the dictionaries. Inalienable possessives are suffixed to nouns. Nouns and their associated adjectives or modifying nouns are often spelled as separate words even when they are fixed terms with their own lexical entry, such as seen in the ambivalence of scholars over whether to use “Rapa Nui” or “Rapanui”. Highly productive reduplication patterns are typical of all Polynesian languages.

Some of the prefixes that have been reconstructed for Proto Polynesian are:

* <i>aa-</i>	ligative particle, like, as, after the manner of
* <i>fai-</i>	prefix deriving noun performer from certain verbs
* <i>faka-</i>	causative prefix (very productive)
* <i>faa-</i>	causative prefix (less common)
* <i>fe-</i>	reciprocal prefix
* <i>fia-</i>	verbal prefix indicating desire, wish
* <i>ka-</i>	stativizing prefix (fossilized)
* <i>ma-</i>	stativizing prefix (productive)
* <i>pa-</i>	stativizing prefix (moderately productive)
* <i>taki-</i>	numeric distributive prefix
* <i>toko-</i>	or
* <i>toka-</i>	human numerical prefix
* <i>tuqa-</i>	ordinal prefix

Some of the suffixes reconstructed are:

* <i>-a</i>	expressing abundance or infestation by N-
* <i>-(C)anga</i>	a noun-forming suffix, substantivizer
* <i>-(C)ia</i>	passivizing/ergativizing suffix
* <i>-ina</i>	passivizing/ergativizing suffix
* <i>-a</i>	passivizing/ergativizing suffix
* <i>-nga</i>	gerundive suffix
* <i>-ngataqa</i>	with difficulty
* <i>-ngaofia</i>	with ease
* <i>-qaki</i>	verbal formative suffix
* <i>-qi</i>	ligative enclitic of possession
* <i>-qi</i>	transitivizing suffix

Possessive pronouns were:

	First	Second	Third
Singular	* <i>-ku</i>	* <i>-u</i>	* <i>-na</i>
Dual	* <i>-ta</i> (incl.)	* <i>-lua</i>	?
	* <i>-ma</i> (excl.)		
Plural	* <i>-tau</i> (incl.)	?	?
	? (excl.)		

Demonstrative formatives included \**-ni* ‘this’, \**-na* ‘that’ and \**-a* ‘that (particular one)’.

Samoan, and especially Tongan, rather than East Polynesian languages, retain more of the morphological complexity that was probably current in Proto Polynesian, and Samoan is the better described. Morphological processes are derivational, never inflectional, and most bound grammatical morphemes are nonproductive. The list of non-relic prefixes for Samoan is short and “heterogenous”:

( <i>’</i> ) <i>a-</i>	future	<i>ma-</i>	de-ergative
<i>ana-</i>	past	<i>maa-</i>	de-regative
<i>au-</i>	lacking something	<i>ta-</i>	plurality of patients
<i>au-</i>	continuous/repeated activity	<i>ta-</i>	verbal derivation
<i>fa’a-</i>	causative	<i>taa-</i>	verbal derivation
<i>fe-</i>	plurality of events	<i>ta’i-</i>	<i>distributive</i>
<i>ma-</i>	able to	<i>to’a-</i>	human

The list of suffixes is similarly short and heterogenous:

<i>-a</i>	“being affected by N-”
<i>-a</i>	ergativizing suffix (productive)
<i>-ina</i>	ergativizing suffix (productive)
<i>-(C)ia</i>	ergativizing suffix (fossilized)
<i>-(C)a’i</i>	intensifier
<i>-e</i>	vocative suffix
<i>-ga</i>	gerundive suffix (more productive)
<i>-(C)aga</i>	gerundive suffix (fossilized)
<i>-(C)i</i>	forms words with more specific meanings

Reduplication in Samoan is of the common Polynesian formations: it may be partial or the whole word may be reduplicated. In form, partial reduplication in Samoan consists of reduplicating the primarily stressed penultimate syllable (which is also the first syllable in those many words which are disyllabic):

<i>atamai</i>	clever	<i>atamamai</i>	clever, plural subject
<i>’emo</i>	blink	<i>’e’emo</i>	blink, plural
<i>motu</i>	break, non-ergative	<i>momotu</i>	break, ergative

As can be seen, the semantic results of this kind of reduplication vary. While reduplication is productive, reduplicated words fixed in the lexicon generally have their own specific sense from amongst various possible outcomes. Pluralization and ergativization are shown above. Other usages disambiguate verbal from nominal use, create frequentives, create an opposite, and create a verb of application from the noun being applied. This is not an exhaustive list. Thus, there is an emphasis on such words being lexicalized and having meanings one

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can guess at but not predict according to one single shift in function and meaning.

Disyllabic words may be reduplicated in full and a disyllable, from the beginning or end of the word, may be reduplicated from trisyllabic and longer roots. Disyllabic reduplication may form plurals, as seen above in single syllable reduplication: (*fitifiti* ‘flick, plural’ from *fiti* ‘flick’) or, more commonly, create a frequentative or intensified verb:

<i>a'a</i>	kick	<i>a'aa'a</i>	kick repeatedly
<i>ala</i>	awake	<i>alaala</i>	sit up and talk
<i>'etu</i>	limp	<i>'etu'etu</i>	frequentative of <i>'etu</i>
<i>lele</i>	fly	<i>lelelele</i>	flutter

While the last form immediately above has a result of intensification, disyllabic reduplication may also result in less of something:

<i>'ata</i>	laugh, laughter	<i>'ata'ata</i>	smile, grin
<i>galu</i>	rough (of sea)	<i>galugalu</i>	ripple
<i>mili</i>	rub	<i>milimili</i>	rub gently

As with single syllable reduplication, disyllable reduplication may form a verb from a noun or clarify whether a noun or verb is meant:

<i>isu</i>	nose	<i>isuisu</i>	inquisitive
<i>miti</i>	sip (n.)	<i>mitimiti</i>	sip (v.)
<i>pepe</i>	butterfly	<i>pepepepe</i>	flutter

Another kind of morphological variation is found in certain plurals, mostly verbs, where the first vowel of the singular has lengthened. These are said to be archaic or very formal usages and occur in a limited number of words, for example:

<i>'aiate</i>	cowardly	<i>'aaiate</i>	cowardly, plural
<i>matua</i>	parent	<i>maatua</i>	parents
<i>punitia</i>	blocked	<i>puunitia</i>	blocked, plural

### Basic Syntax

Proto Polynesian morpho-syntax was the subject of Clark's 1976 study as were earlier and subsequent works by Clark and Chung. Amongst other things, their work continues work by Hohepa which considers whether there has been an accusative-to-ergative drift in Polynesian languages or vice-versa.

In terms of transitive constructions, Clark posits a Proto Polynesian system more like Tongan and Samoan than New Zealand Maori. He attributes the main differences in Maori to changes which occurred at the time of Maori's common development in East Polynesia with Rapanui, Marquesan, Hawaiian, Tahitian and other East Polynesian languages (after their divergence from Samoan and before their divergence from each other). All Polynesian languages have constructions where subjects of intransitive verbs are marked as in the nominative case by the absence of a preposition. In their passive/ergative equivalents the agent is marked by *e* and Proto Polynesian \**e* is reconstructed. The two patterns can be observed in the following two Samoan sentences:

#### Pattern I

Saa alofa le tagata le teine.  
TENSE love ART. man ART. girl  
'The man loved the girl.'

#### Pattern II

Saa alofa-gia e le tagata le teine.  
TENSE love-ERG. NOM. ART man ART. girl  
'The girl was loved by the man.'

A third type of construction in Tongan, Samoan, Rapanui and many other languages, Pattern III, is one in which the Erg. suffix is omitted and ergativity signaled only by the \**e* marker. Clark posits a situation where Type A verbs, such as, “eat” or “hit” and Type B verbs, such as, “see” or “listen to” have had shifting relations with respect to Patterns I, II and III since Proto Polynesian. In Proto Polynesian, Pattern I occurred only with Type B verbs, Pattern II occurred with Type A verbs and some Type B while Pattern III only occurred with Type A verbs. Both examples above are VSO which was the Proto Polynesian pattern in such constructions. Subject pronouns preceded the verb and object pronouns followed the verb but did not occur, except for emphasis, when the subject or object noun was expressed.

### Contact With Other Languages

Prior to Western contact, borrowing of non-Polynesian words was extremely limited within the Polynesian Triangle. It has long been assumed that Early East Polynesian \**kumara* ‘sweet potato’ is a pre-European loan from QUECHUA, probably by way of Rapanui which shows other South American cultural influences, but more recently there has been the observation that Quechua is not spoken on the coast where Polynesian and South American contacts most probably occurred. Other possible links between South American and Polynesian vocabulary have not been supported by modern linguistic analysis.

In the west there was borrowing from Fijian, especially by Tongan, and the most convincing cases thus far demonstrated have been names of plants and other useful materials and objects.

There was much intra-Polynesian borrowing, mainly between neighboring islands, for example, between Tongan and Samoan; Samoan loanwords in East Futunan, East Uvean, Tuvalu, and Tokelauan; massive Tongan loanwords in East Uvean and Niuafo'ou and total replacement of a distinct Niuaotupapu language by Tongan; East Polynesian loanwords in Niuean; Tahitian loans in Southern Cook, Austral and Tuamotuan languages and dialects; and Tahitic loanwords in Hawaiian overlaying a Marquesic base.

All Polynesian languages, however isolated, have large numbers of borrowings from European languages. This may involve material culture terms or more, depending on the size and isolation of the island, the interest the Europeans have taken in the island, and the interest of the Polynesians in the Europeans. Colonial histories have been Spanish then Chilean in Rapanui, with the consequent importance of the SPANISH language; FRENCH through the center of East Polynesia (the Societies, Tuamotus and Marquesas), East Futuna, East Uvea, and West Uvea; and ENGLISH language countries elsewhere (Ameri-

Table 2: Common Words

	Hawaiian	Tahitian	Samoan	N.Z. Maori	Rapanui
man:	kaane	taane	taane	kaane	taane
woman:	wahine	vahine	fafine	wahine	tamahahine
water:	wai	vai	vai	wai	vai
sun:	laa	raa	laa	raa	ra'a
three:	kolu	toru	tolu	toru	toru
fish:	i'a	i'a	i'a	ika	ika
big:	nui	nui	tele	nui	nui
long:	loa	roa	loa	roa	roa
small:	li'i, iki	ri'i, iti	lili'i, itiiti	riki, iti	riki, iti
yes:	'ae, 'ee, oo	'ae, 'ee	'ioe, 'ii	aae	eee
no:	'a'ole, 'a'ohe	'aima, a'ore	leai	kaore	ina
good:	maika'i	maita'i	lelei	pai	riva-riva
bird:	manu	manu-rere	manu	manu	manu
dog:	'iilio	'uri	maile	kurii	kuri
tree:	laa'au	ra'au	laa'au	raakau	tumu

can in Hawaii and Eastern Samoa, and British in Western Samoa, the Cooks, and New Zealand). Outliers other than West Uvea have been more heavily influenced by English than French. Bilingualism with European languages led to extensive borrowings in Hawaii, New Zealand, Tahiti, and Rapanui. Hawaiian was almost lost and, through the middle of the twentieth century, used mainly on an island (Ni'ihau) privately owned and traditionally managed by native Hawaiians. French influence has been profound on some of the large islands of the Societies (Tahiti). French loanwords are common in modern Tahitian and 20 percent of native Tahitians now speak only French. The dialects of the Tuamotus, from the northwest and moving southeast, have been overwhelmed in recent generations by a shift to Neo-Tahitian and the local atoll dialects being replaced have never been well-described.

Outlier Polynesian languages have had other kinds of influences. Because they are so small and isolated, they have been largely insulated from Western influences of a profound sort. Rather, as one might expect, they show varying degrees of borrowing from neighboring Melanesian languages and, now, depending on locality, Neo-Melanesian (pidgin English). Anutan and Tikopian have substantial loanwords from East Uvean and Tongan from the prehistoric period.

## Example Sentences

### (1) Samoan:

Ona laa a'e ai lea 'i Tutuila e i ai  
so 3<sup>rd</sup> dual go there it to Tutuila who at there

Pagopago i ona luga a'e.

Pagopago at to over ascent

'Then they went on to Tutuila, and to the place on which Pagopago looks down.'

### (2) Rapanui:

Ana noho au i Hiva, he topa hakaou  
when stay I at/on continent ART. get occasion

mai te mana'u mo toou.

hither tea remember for my

'When I'm on the Continent, I drink tea (idiom for habitual action).'

### (3) Hawaiian:

Hanau o Maui he moku, he 'aina, na kama  
birth of Maui INDEF island INDEF land for child(ren)

o Kamalalawalue noho.

of Kamalalawalue dwell

'Maui was born an island, a land, a dwelling place for the children of Kamalalawalue.'

### (4) Tahitian:

Tae i hiti'a, i te Tua Motu e i Ma'areva.

arrive at east, to DEF Tuamotus and to Mangareva

'They went to the east, to the Tuamotus and Mangareva.'

### (5) Maori:

Tangihia e Apakura ki te whanau a

lament by Apakura with DEF. family of

Kuru-Tongia, he roroa Wai-Rerewa kau.

Kuru-Tongia, INDEF. tall Wai-Rerewa ancestor

'Apakura lamented with the family of Kuru-Tongia, all tall of stature, descendants of Wai-Rerewa.'

## Efforts to Preserve, Protect, and Promote the Languages

Aside from Hawaiian, New Zealand Maori, and Rapanui, Polynesian languages are generally so isolated from outside influences that language death has not occurred nor is it likely to occur. Endangered languages are mainly those just mentioned and some Tuamotuan and Austral languages which are being replaced by Neo-Tahitian. French influences are substantial around Tahiti but 80 percent of native Tahitians speak

the language; radio, television and newspapers use Tahitian; and strong sentiments towards cultural survival and revival amongst many young Tahitians (and their use of the language with their children) result in an overall situation where the language cannot be said to be in immediate danger.

On modern Hawaii, it has become popular for people of the various ethnic groups to study and now use the language and one can hear it colloquially around some of the schools and universities and even out around the towns and cities. Immersion schools exist but in very small numbers. There are presently eleven such preschools and a few primary schools leading to two such high schools (grades 7–12). Total enrolment is 1,700+ including Ni'ihau children. University students studying Hawaiian as a second language now number over 2,000.

New Zealand Maori language programs have been in place for about 20 years. By 1989 such programs included 400 "nests," Maori preschools. As in Hawaii, it is a revival program rather than a preservation program, there being almost no native speakers under 40 years of age. The object of these programs has been to produce fluent second language speakers among preschool children and then to support their use and continuing learning of the language as they come of school age.

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