

TABLE 5.1 Data from Four Polynesian Languages

	Tongan	Samoaan	Rarotongan	Hawaiian	
1.	tapu	tapu	tapu	kapu	'forbidden'
2.	pito	pute	pito	piko	'navel'
3.	puihi	feula	puʔi	puhi	'blow'
4.	tafaʔaki	tafa	taʔa	kaha	'side'
5.	taʔe	tae	tae	kae	'feces'
6.	tapata	tapata	tapata	kanaka	'man'
7.	tahi	tai	tai	kai	'sea'
8.	malohi	malosi	kaʔa	ʔaha	'strong'
9.	kalo	ʔalo	karo	ʔalo	'dodge'
10.	aka	aʔa	aka	aʔa	'root'
11.	ʔahu	au	au	au	'gall'
12.	ʔulu	ulu	uru	poʔo	'head'
13.	ʔufi	ufi	uʔi	uhi	'yarn'
14.	afi	afi	aʔi	ahi	'fire'
15.	faa	faa	ʔaa	haa	'four'
16.	feke	feʔe	ʔeke	heʔe	'octopus'
17.	ika	iʔa	ika	iʔa	'fish'
18.	ihu	isu	putapio	ihu	'nose'
19.	hau	sau	ʔau	hau	'dew'
20.	tafuaʔi	siʔa	ʔika	hiʔa	'firemaking'
21.	hiku	siʔu	ʔiku	hiʔu	'tail'
22.	hake	aʔe	ake	aʔe	'up'
23.	huu	ulu	uru	komo	'enter'
24.	maʔa	maʔa	maʔa	mana	'branch'
25.	maʔu	mau	mau	mau	'constant'
26.	maa	mala	mara	mala	'fermented'
27.	naʔa	faʔaʔa	maninia	naa	'quieten'
28.	nofo	nofo	noʔo	noho	'sit'
29.	ʔalu	ʔalu	ʔaru	nalu	'wave'
30.	ʔutu	ʔutu	ʔutu	nuku	'mouth'
31.	vaka	vaʔa	vaka	waʔa	'canoe'
32.	vaʔe	vae	vae	vae	'leg'
33.	laho	laso	raʔo	laho	'scrotum'
34.	lohu	lou	rou	lou	'fruit-picking pole'
35.	oʔo	logo	roʔo	lono	'hear'
36.	ua	hua	rua	lua	'two'

5.2.2 Finding the Cognates

There are a number of steps that you must follow. The first step is to sort out the forms that appear to be cognate from those that do not. If two words are not cognate, it means that they are derived from different original forms, and are not reflexes of the same original form as the others. In deciding whether or not two forms are cognate, you need to consider how similar they are, both in form and in meaning. If they are similar enough that it could be assumed they are derived from a single original form with a single original meaning, then we say that they are COGNATE.

You can begin by excluding from the list above a word such as /tafuaʔi/ 'firemaking' in Tongan (20). The words to express the same meaning in the other three languages are /siʔa/ in Samoan, /ʔika/ in Rarotongan, and /hiʔa/ in Hawaiian. These last three forms are all quite similar phonetically, as well as being identical in meaning, and it is easy to imagine that they might be reflexes of a single original word in Proto-Polynesian. The Tongan word /tafuaʔi/, although it has the same meaning, is so different in its shape that you can assume that it has a totally different source altogether.

The fact that the Tongan word /tafuaʔi/ contains the final element /-aʔi/, along with the fact that the Tongan word for 'fire' is /afi/ (14), suggest that this word may be a combination of some unknown element /tafu-/ and the word for 'fire'. Example 4 presents us with a similar case:

Tongan	Samoaan	Rarotongan	Hawaiian
4.	tafaʔaki	tafa	taʔa
		kaha	'side'

It seems clear that the first two syllables of the longer Tongan word are cognate with the words in the remaining Polynesian languages. The second two syllables of the Tongan form, however, do not have any cognate forms in the other languages. We can therefore assume that in Tongan, at some stage in its history, an extra morpheme was added. What was originally regarded as being a morphologically complex word then came to be regarded by speakers as morphologically simple. That is, some other morpheme came to be *reanalyzed* as part of the root. In carrying out comparative reconstruction, you must also exclude examples such as these that involve reanalysis and consider only those parts of words that are actually cognate. We can therefore set out the cognate part of the Tongan word removed, and a hyphen being used to indicate that something has been left off:

Tongan	Samoaan	Rarotongan	Hawaiian
4.	tafa-	tafa	taʔa
		kaha	'side'

From the data in table 5.1, there are several other forms expressing the same meaning that we would want to exclude as not being cognate because they are phonologically so different from the forms in the other languages. In the Samoan data, you should probably exclude the following: (2) /pute/ 'navel', (3) /feula/ 'blow', and (27) /faʔaŋa/ 'quieten'. In Rarotongan, you must exclude the following forms, which are apparently not cognate with words in other languages expressing the same meaning: (18) /putanjio/ 'nose' and (27) /maninia/ 'quieten'. Finally, in Hawaiian, you will need to exclude the following: (12) /poʔo/ 'head' and (23) /komo/ 'enter'. (While we are discussing which words we should consider to be cognate, I will also make the very obvious point that, although the Samoan word /ira/ 'fish' (17) and the Hawaiian word /hiʔa/ 'firemaking' (20) are similar in shape, they are not considered to be cognates because their meanings are totally different.)

5.2.3 Sound Correspondences

Having completed the first step, you are now ready to move on to step two. The second step is to set out the complete set of sound correspondences. When I talk about a SOUND CORRESPONDENCE, I mean that we try to find each set of sounds that appears to be descended from the same original sound. So, if you take the first word in the list that I have given, you will find the following correspondences between the sounds:

Tongan	t	a	p	u
Samoa	t	a	p	u
Rarotongan	t	a	p	u
Hawaiian	k	a	p	u

You can see that there is an initial correspondence of /t/ in Tongan to /t/ in Samoa, to /t/ in Rarotongan, and to /k/ in Hawaiian. The /a/ in Tongan corresponds to an /a/ in all of the remaining three languages. Similarly, there is a correspondence of /p/ in all four languages, and, finally, there is a correspondence of /u/ in all four languages. These correspondences can be set out like this:

	Tongan	Samoa	Rarotongan	Hawaiian
t	t	t	t	k
a	a	a	a	a
p	p	p	p	p
u	u	u	u	u

What you have to do is list *all* such sound correspondences that are present in the whole of the data.

Actually, a quick examination of the vowel correspondences reveals that the vowels are identical in all four languages in all words. (Don't let this make you think that for other languages the vowels will be as straightforward as this! Sometimes it will be the vowels rather than the consonants which have the most complicated sets of sound correspondences. Usually, both consonants and vowels will exhibit variations in their correspondences.) In order to be completely thorough, I will set out the vowel correspondences for you, even though there are no differences between the four languages:

	Tongan	Samoa	Rarotongan	Hawaiian
a	a	a	a	a
e	e	e	e	e
i	i	i	i	i
o	o	o	o	o
u	u	u	u	u

Let us now concentrate on the consonant correspondences, which is where the differences are to be found between these languages. The correspondence sets for consonants work out to be as follows:

	Tongan	Samoa	Rarotongan	Hawaiian
p	p	p	p	p
f	f	f	ʔ	h
t	t	t	t	k
k	ʔ	ʔ	k	ʔ
h	s	s	ʔ	h
m	m	m	m	m
n	n	n	n	n
ŋ	ŋ	ŋ	ŋ	n
v	v	v	v	w
l	l	l	r	l
∅	l	l	r	l

There is one brief point that I should make before continuing, and this concerns the use of the zero symbol ∅. This symbol is used to express correspondences such as the following in the word for 'feces' (5):