Alor-Pantar Languages: Origins and Theoretical Impact

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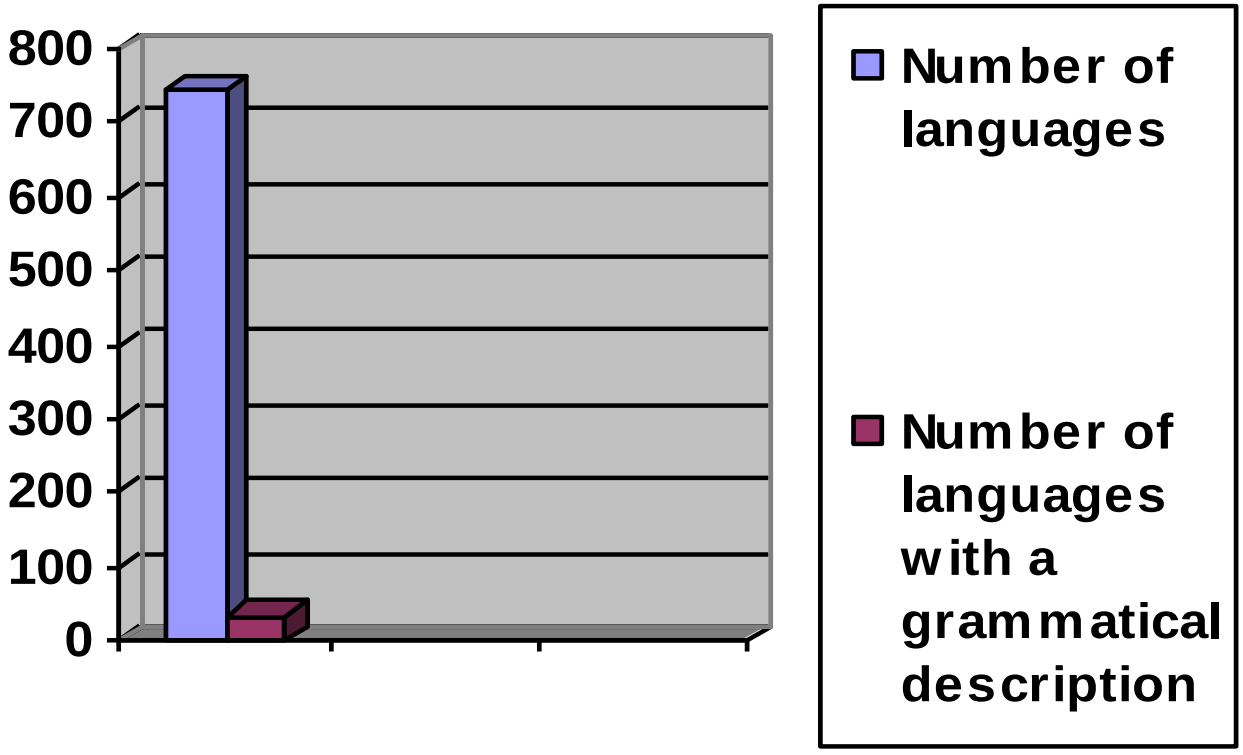
1. Introduction

- 1. Introduction
  - Linguistic diversity in Indonesia
  - The Alor Pantar languages
- 2. Individual projects
  - Fairbanks: Linguistic prehistory
  - Leiden: Extended documentation
  - Surrey: Typology
- 3. Discussion

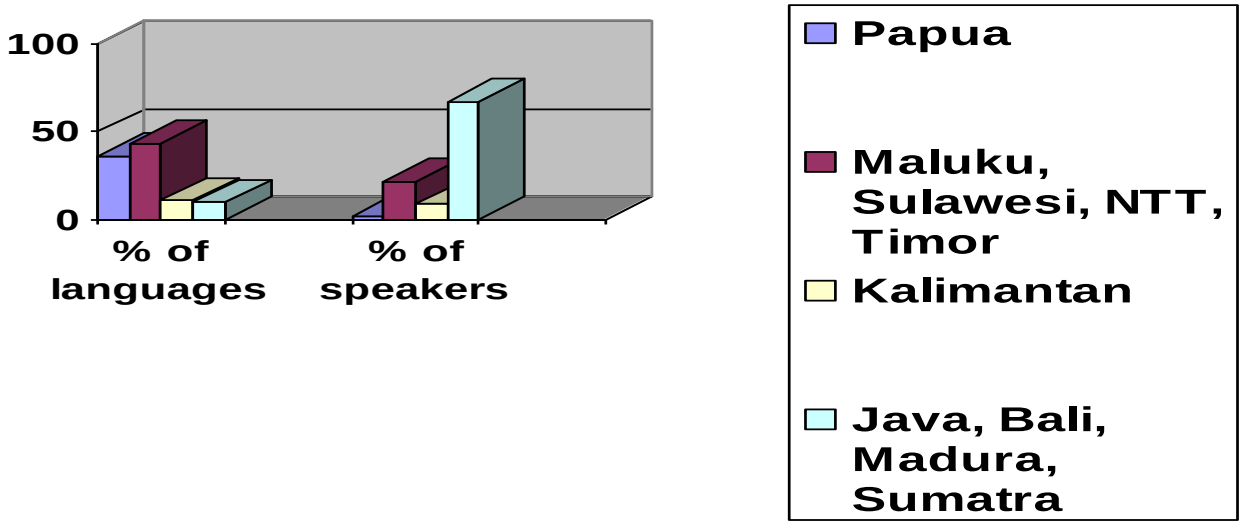
Over 700 languages spoken in Indonesia

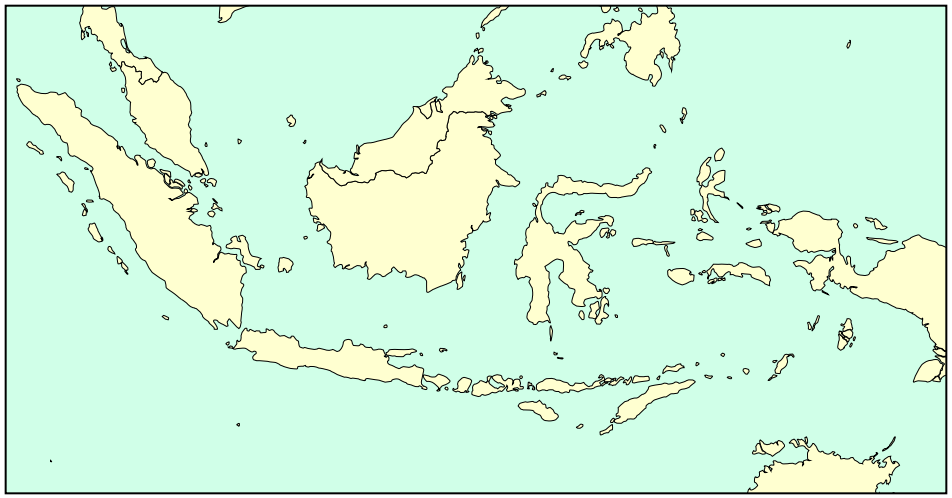


1. Introduction: Linguistic diversity in Indonesia

- 90% of the languages less than 100,000 speakers
- 10% of the languages more than 100,000 speakers
- Geographical spread is uneven

Languages & Speakers in Indonesian regions

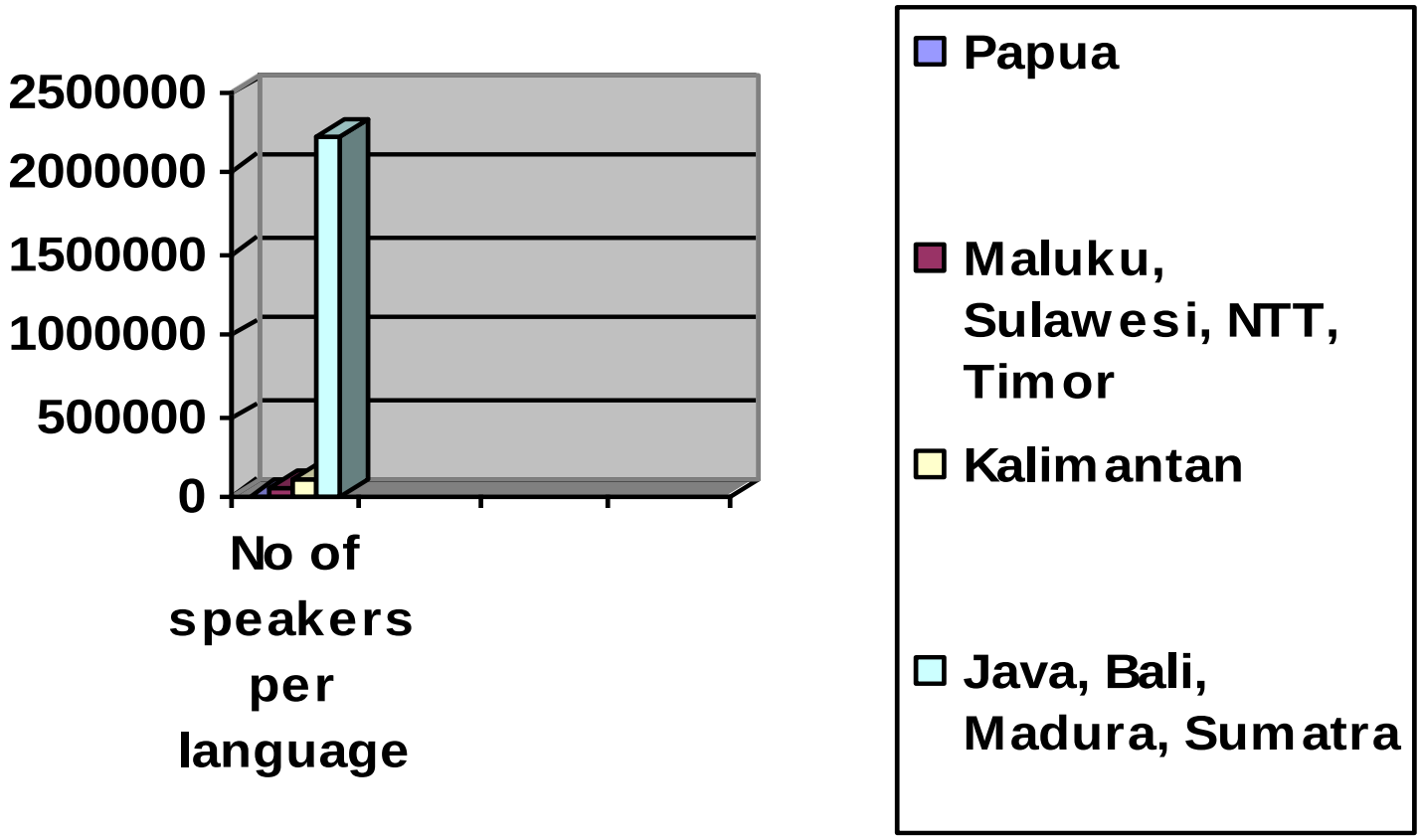


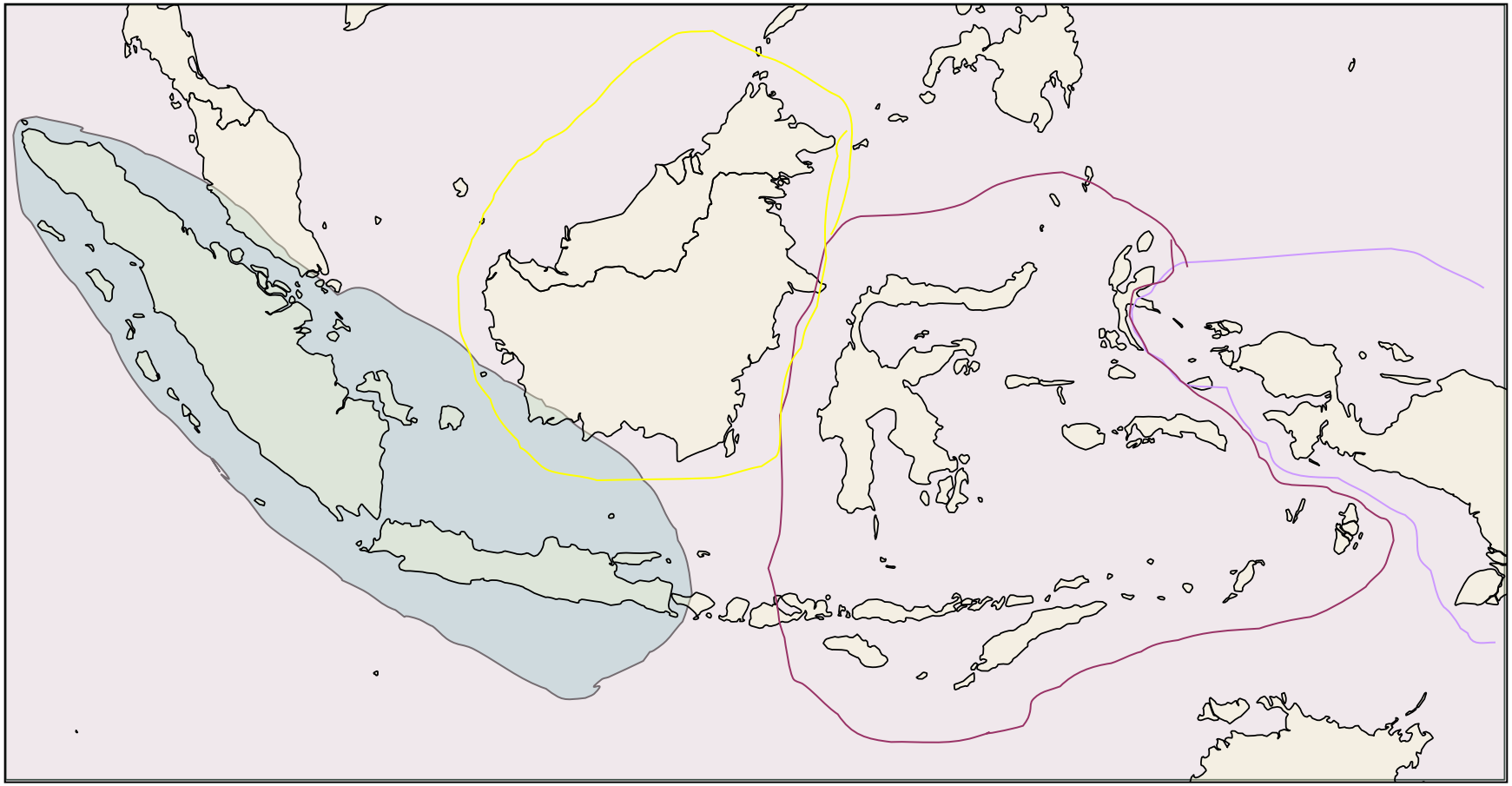


1. Introduction: Linguistic diversity in Indonesia

- If 100,000 speakers are needed for a language to survive, then 90% of the Indonesian languages are endangered
- And 33% of the Indonesians speak an endangered language

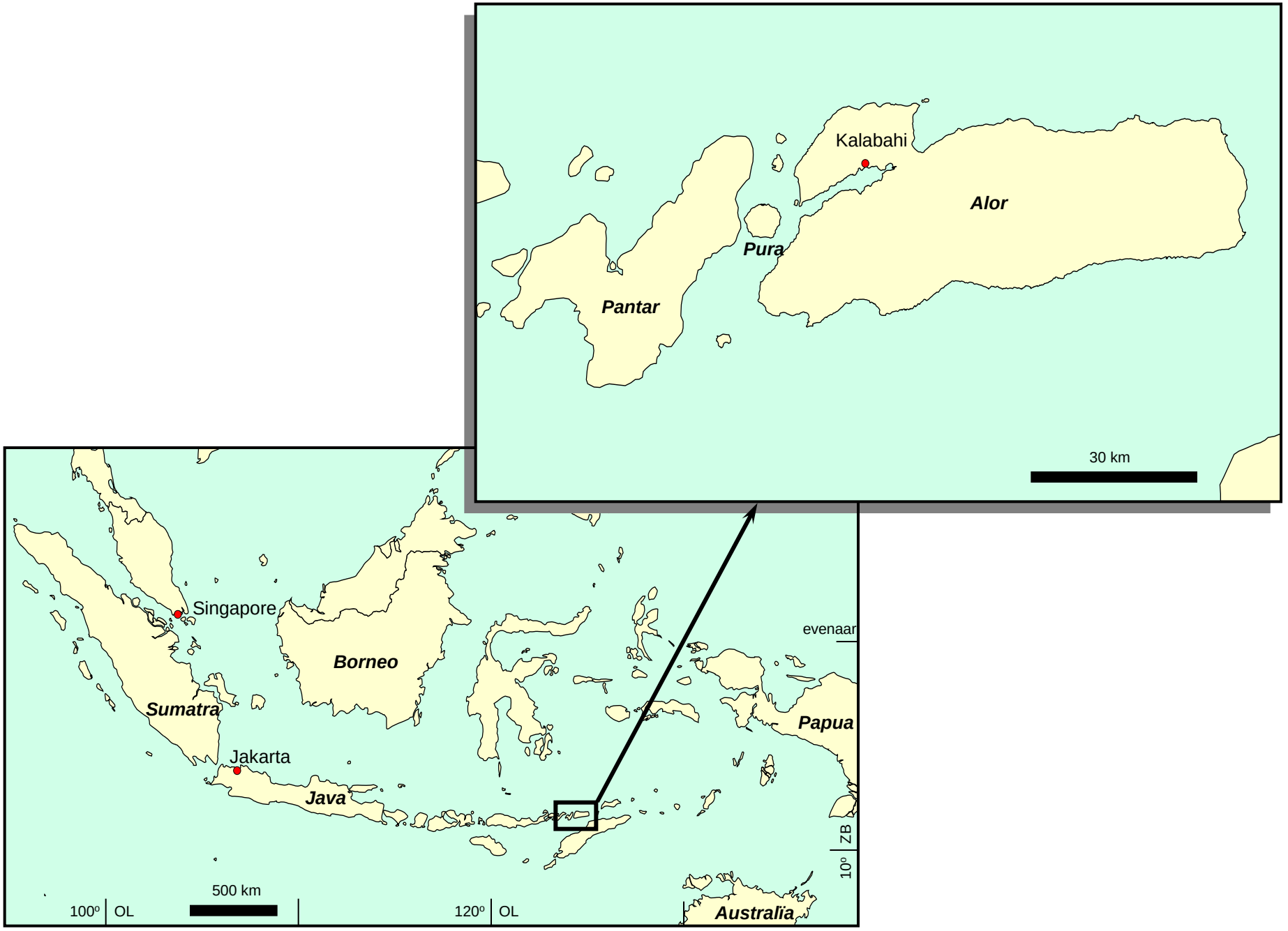
No. of Speakers per language, according to region





1. Introduction: The Alor Pantar languages

- Alor island, Pantar island and surrounding islands
- Situated just North of Timor island:


Kalabahi
Alor
Pura
Pantar
30 km
Singapore
Borneo
Sumatra
Jakarta
Java
Papua
Australïa
evenaar
ZB
10°
500 km
100° OL
120° OL

1. Introduction: The Alor Pantar languages

- 15-24 languages
- Of which approx. 14 on Alor:

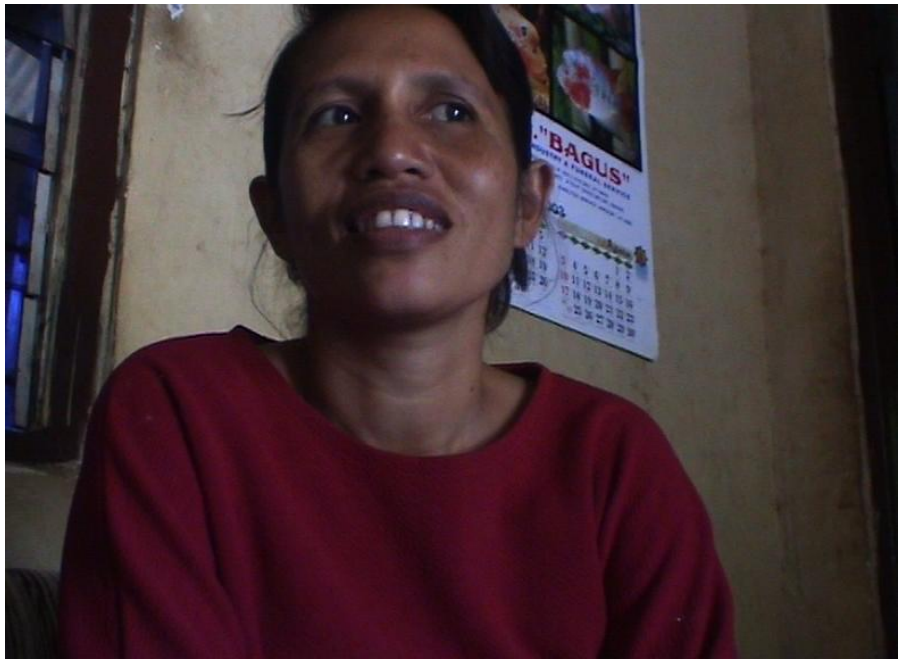
Linguistic diversity in Alor Pantar: an illustration

- **Orthography Workshop,**
- **July 2004:**
- **63 participants / 16 languages**

• Abui	9
• Adang	6
• Alor	10
• Blagar Pantar	5
• Kabola	4
• Kamang	1
• Kolana	5
• Kula	1
• Deing	1
• Lamma	1
• Manata	1
• Mauta	1
• Pura	2
• Sawila	3
• Teiwa	1
• Wersing	1

1. Introduction: The Alor Pantar languages

- Alor languages:



- Language Map of Alor removed because of copyright

Satellite image of Alor (2,330 square km)
Two major mountains: Kolana/Koya-Koya (1,765 metres) and Muna (1,440 metres); both are old volcanoes

Introduction:
The Alor Pantar languages

- Pantar (693 square km)
- 40,000 inhabitants
- Mountain range (660 m) divides the island in two parts
- Pantar has a volcano with two tops: Delaki (1,018 metres) & Sirung (1,318 metres)
- 10 (?) languages on Pantar and surroundings

- Language Map of Pantar removed because of copyright

Introduction: The Alor Pantar languages

- 15-24 languages / 160,000 people
- All endangered; Average 4,000-7,000 speakers per language
- High level of bilingualism (Indonesian/Malay)
- 1949: Independence; Indonesian national language
- 1975 onwards: Indonesian is only language allowed in education
- influence spreads through mass education, economic growth > mobility, urbanization

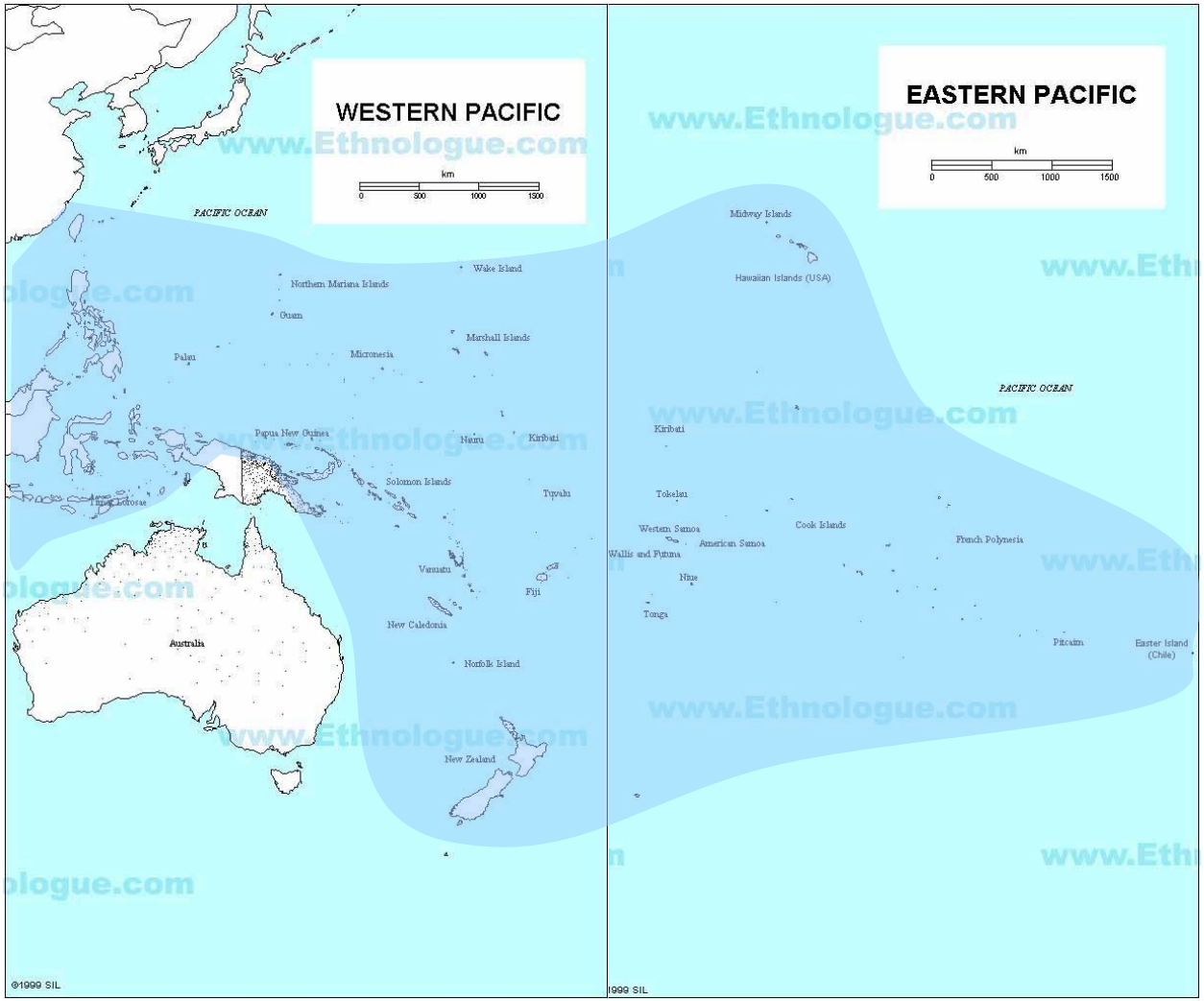
Introduction: The Alor Pantar languages

- Low status of local languages
- For rituals, parties, dances, informal situations
- High standard of Indonesian as language of education, media, government
- Traditionally, many speakers are bi-trilingual,
- Husband/wife often speak different languages
- Various languages per clan / village > Indonesian becomes the common language
- Children learn Indonesian/Malay as first language

Introduction:
The Alor Pantar languages

- Non-Austronesian or “Papuan” languages
- Surrounded by languages of the Austronesian family:

Austronesian languages



Maps © SIL ethnologue

Papuan Languages

Maps © SIL ethnologue

Introduction:
The Alor Pantar languages

- AP languages are different from Austronesian languages:
  - In lexicon:

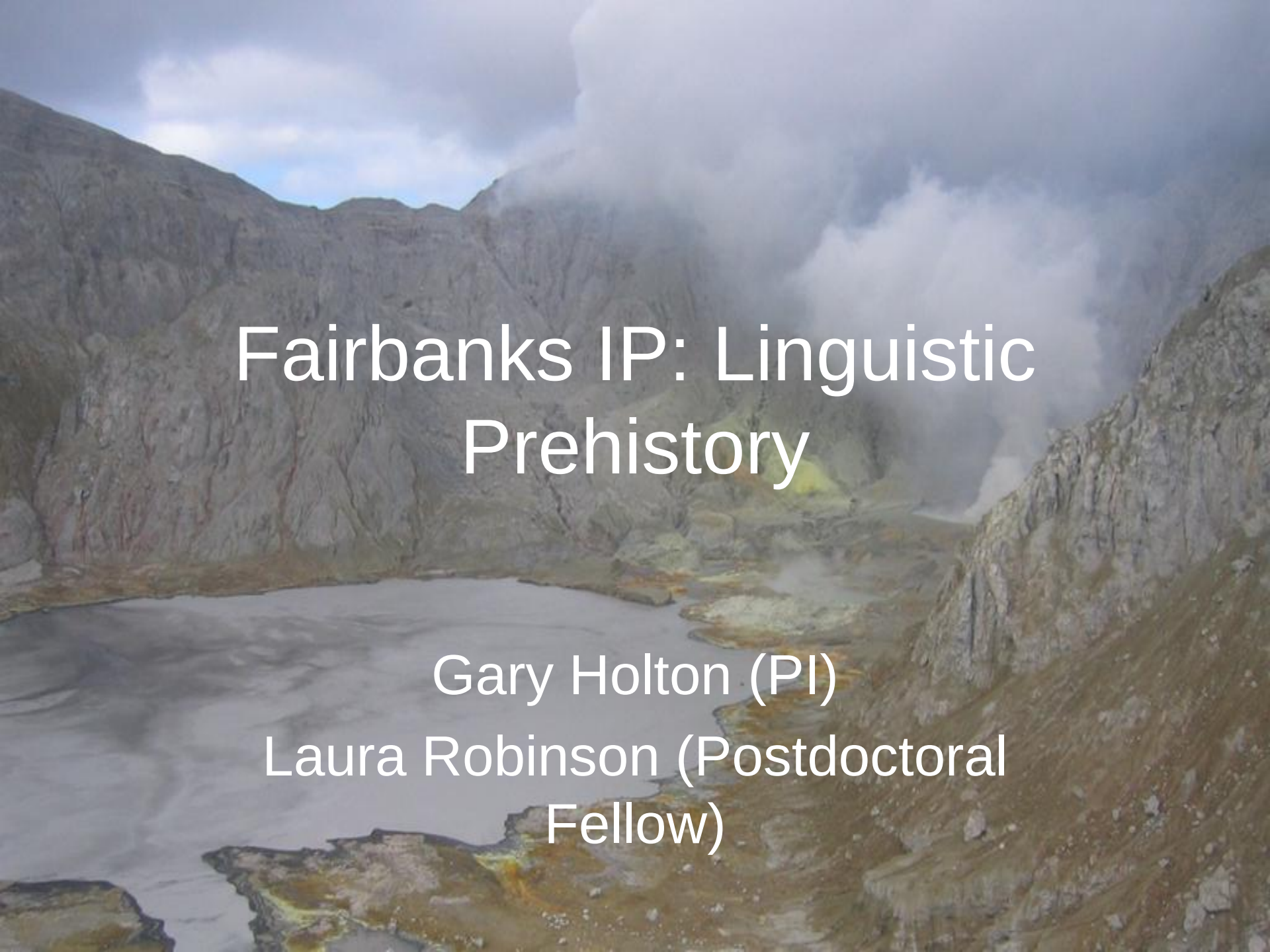
Teiwa (Papuan)	Alorese (Austronesian)	
bu'lɑŋqul	'laŋi	‘sky’
'wɑrgɛ:t	la'ra:	‘sun’
'wur	'fulaŋ	‘moon’
'yif	ta'mala	‘star’
'ʔiqɑ'ʔɑn	ma'reŋ	‘night’
'iliɑr	la'ra:	‘day’
'tun	'tu:ŋ	‘year’
,qei'ʔɑu	'aŋi	‘wind’

Introduction: The Alor Pantar languages

- AP languages are different from Austronesian languages:
  - In grammatical characteristics
    - E.g. object-verb order, postpositions (rather than verb-object, prepositions), final negations...
  - This raises the question: If they are not Austronesian, what are they? Where did they come from?

2. Individual projects

- Fairbanks IP: Linguistic prehistory



Fairbanks IP: Linguistic Prehistory

Gary Holton (PI)

Laura Robinson (Postdoctoral Fellow)

Previous work

- Non-Austronesian Alor-Pantar languages intuitively related based on lexical similarities
  - Stokhof 1975 provides 107-item wordlists
- Non-Austronesian languages of Timor are usually included as well, thus “TAP”
  - lexical evidence not as clear; may include non-TAP non-Austronesian substrate

Lexical correspondences

- ‘smoke’ (b:f:p)
  - bu□ n, har.bu□ n, bu:n, bun:a, a:d bənax, bunna, bu.na, banaka, bɔna, hɑbɑnoʔ, ba.noʔ, a.bano.o, ədɑbon, fo.nɑ, -fɔŋ, punɑ, pinakɑ, pʊnɑkɑ, pʊnɑkɑ
- ‘ear’ (w:v:f)
  - nɑwarwɑʔ, gəwar, guwɑr wɑʔ, go waa, guar wa, ga-uwe, na.wal, nEveri, nɑwel, nɑwɛl, afɛl, tafil, a.wel, gəwɛr, tɑ.wɛi, hɑwɛɪ ʔɑtɑ, nɑwɑj, nɑwɑj, ŋwalaha, nɑwɑrɪ, nɛwɛrilakɑ,

History of classification

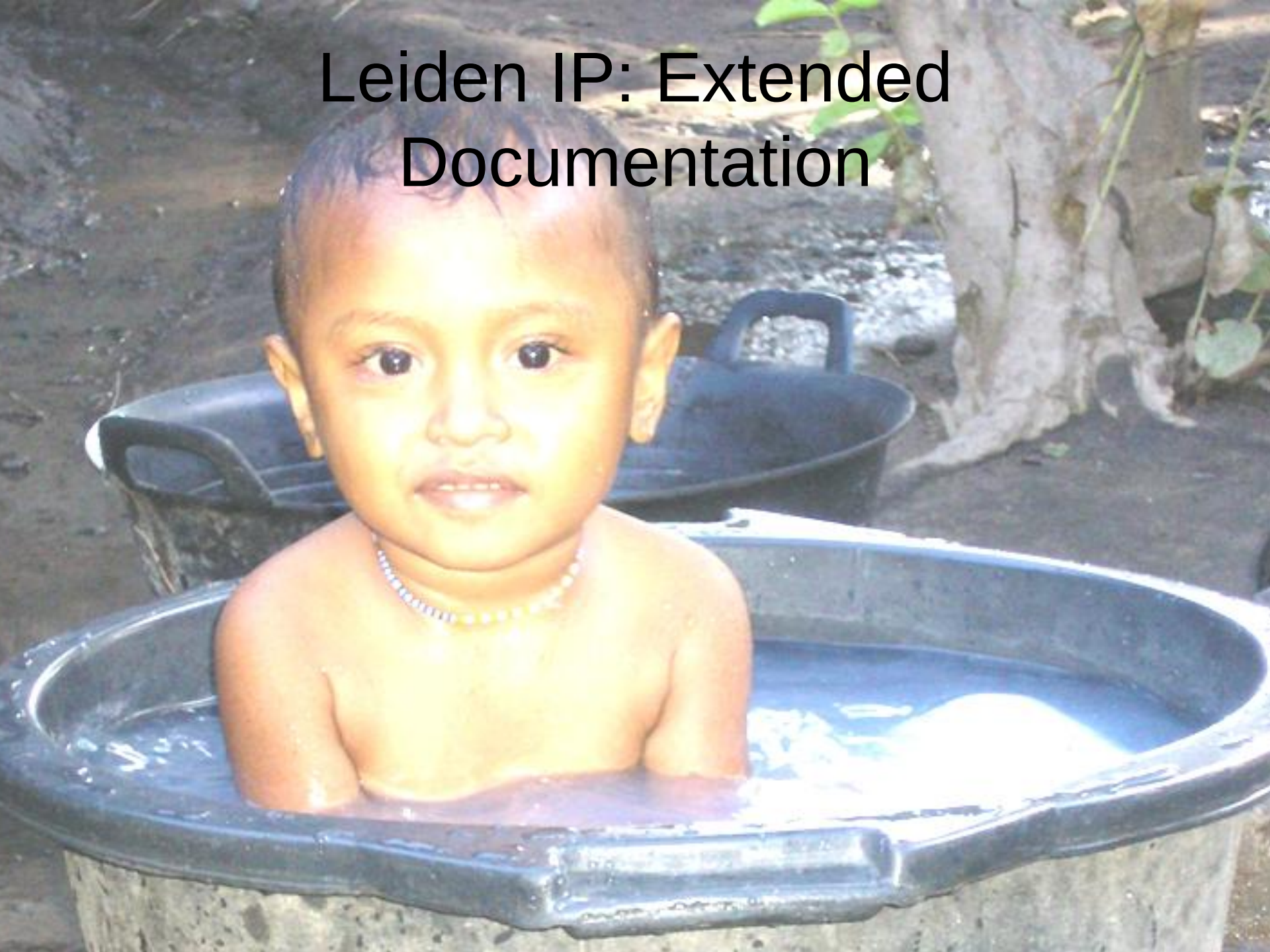
- West Papuan (Capell 1944)
  - based on examination of pronominal prefixes
- Trans-New Guinea Phylum (Wurm et al 1975)
  - noting they “contain strong substratum elements”
- Trans-New Guinea Linkage (Ross 2005)
  - again based on pronoun shape
- WP / TNG (Donohue & Schapper 2007)
  - also focuses on pronoun shape

TAP, WP, and TNG families

Pronoun “flip-flop”

	pTNG	Nedebang
1SG	*na	naŋ
2SG	*ŋga	aŋ
3SG	*(y)a	gaŋ

Leiden IP: Extended Documentation



Leiden IP: Extended Documentation

- Documentation of AP languages to date:
- Before 2000
  - almost nothing
- After 2000
  - 4 grammars
  - 1 sketch grammar
  - 2 dictionaries
  - Articles and book chapters

Leiden IP: Extended Documentation

- Which areas of the AP languages require more documentation?
  - Reference to entities in space
  - Numerical expressions

Leiden IP: Extended Documentation

- **Spatial domain**
- Teiwa words for ‘come’ and ‘go’ encode Motion, Direction & Elevation
  - Direction: moving towards speaker or away from speaker?
  - Elevation: are you on the same level with the person you talk to, or not?
- Same level: *Ma!* Come (here)! *Gi!* Go away (from me)!
- Speaker lower: *Yaa!* Come here (down), *Mir!* Go away (up)
- Speaker higher: *Daa!* Come here (up), *Yix!* Go away (down)
- These 6 words are now being replaced by 2 Indonesian words

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- **Locative expressions**
- In many languages, locations are expressed with adpositions or case inflections:
  - *... **in** hort**o** ambulant* ‘walk in the garden’
  - *... **in** hort**um** ambulant* ‘walk (in)to the garden’
- Verbs play marginal role in locative constructions
  - *cf. The book **sits** on the table*
- AP languages:
  - None of them has case markers (like Latin does)
  - Few postpositions
  - Verbs and locational nouns are used to express locations:

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- Verbs and locational nouns express locations

Bif goqai	*un*	*ga-xala'*	***ga-siban***	***ma***	***o'on.***
child	Prog	his-mother	**her-behind**	**come**	**hide**

- Free translation: 'The child is hiding behind his mother'
- Lit.:'The child - his mother's behind comes - [he is] hiding'

Tami	*un*	*Lius*	***ga-muka***	***ma***	***yia.***
tamarind	Prog	Lius	**his-front(Ind)**	**come**	**put**

- Free translation 'The tamarind tree is in front of Lius'
- Lit: 'Tamarind – Lius's front comes – [it is] being put'

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- **Spatial Domain and Locative Expressions: Aims**
- Document details, before they are lost
- Compare similar forms/structures across the languages
- Establish historical connections among particular forms across languages
- Reconstruct how words in individual languages changed over time
- >> Feeds into linguistic prehistory project
- >> Helps to understand
  - (i) cultural, geographical and cognitive factors that determine deictic systems
  - (ii) how spatial notions are linguistically encoded in languages that are poor in adpositions / case markers
  - (iii) how AP speakers categorize physical environment

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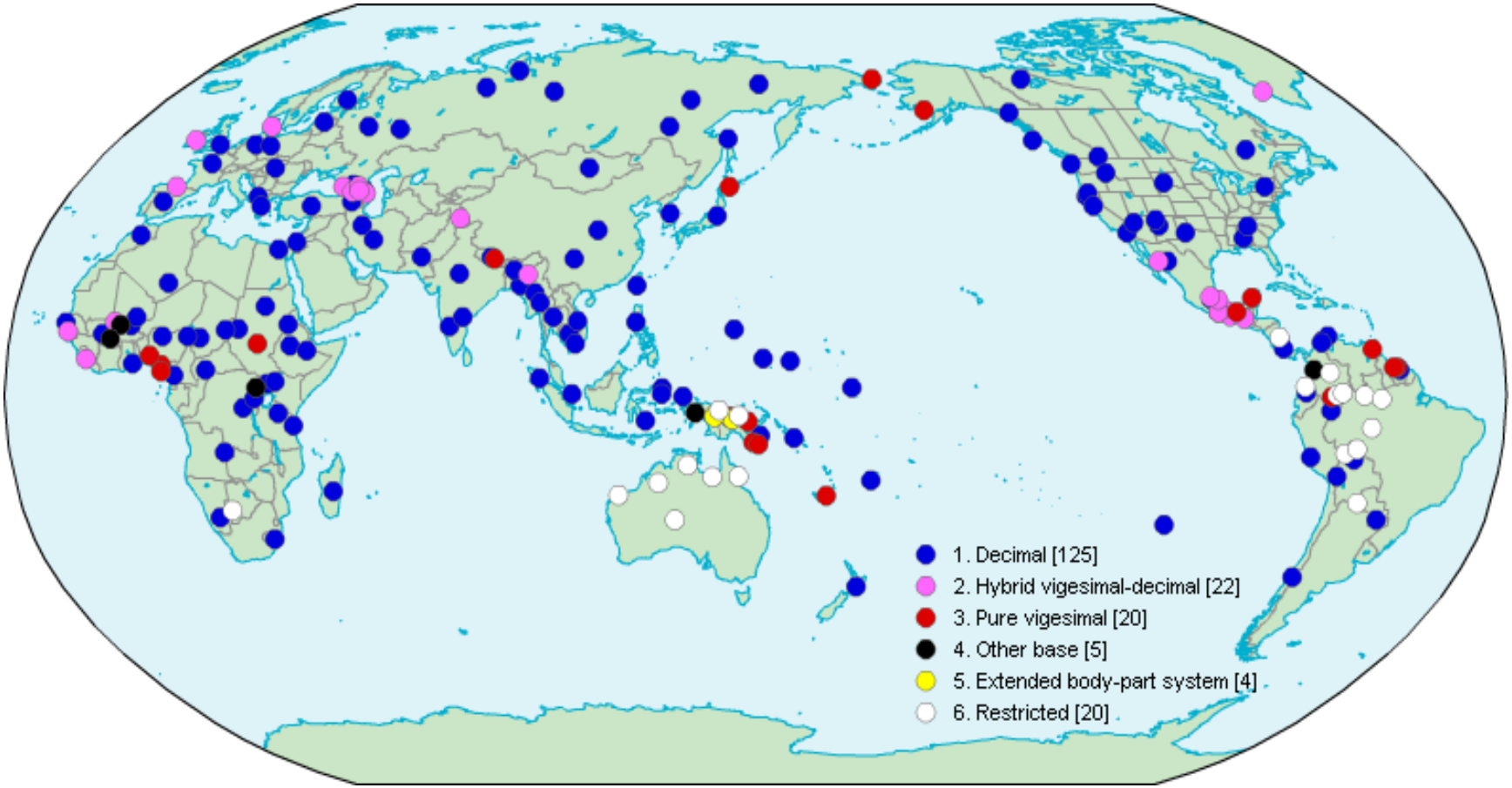
- **Numeral expressions**
- Many AP languages show traces of a **rare quinary** (base-5) system in the lower cardinals:

- *yes haraq* ‘seven’
- five two

- About 80% of the world’s languages are decimal, or combine a decimal with a vigesimal (base-20) system

Numerals



Comrie (2005 chapter 131)

Numerals

Comrie (2005 chapter 131)

Leiden IP: Extended Documentation

- Numeral systems are particularly **endangered:**
- Often **replaced** by systems of dominant languages, starting with the higher numerals
- This process is also at work in AP languages: *ratu* ‘hundred’ and *ribu* ‘thousand’ are Indonesian words used in most of the languages

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- **Numeral classifiers**
- *Two bars of soap*
- *Dua orang mahasiswa* ‘two students’
- (lit. two person student)
- Languages with numeral classifiers do not mark their nouns for number (e.g. plural) (Greenberg 1972)
- Classifiers are largely absent in the Papuan languages of New Guinea (Gil 2005)
- Frequent in Austronesian languages
- Variable distribution and function in AP languages

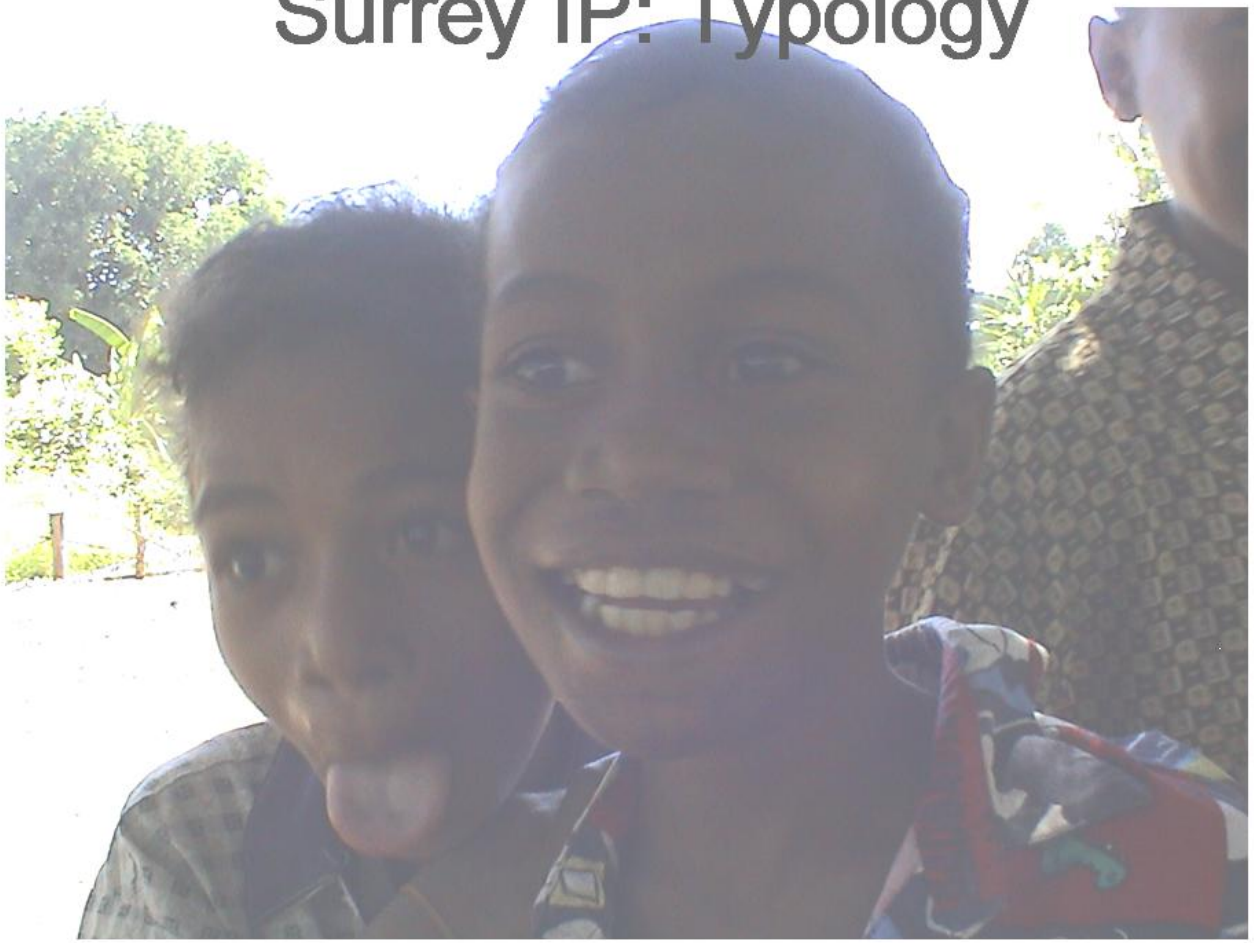
Leiden IP: Extended Documentation

- **Numerical expressions: Issues**
- **Documentation:**
- Distribution across the AP languages
- Function
- Dimensions or concepts they encode
- **History:**
- Possible to reconstruct proto-forms of one or more numeral classifiers?
- If not, are they innovative
- Or they could be the result of contact with Austronesian languages
- **Grammatical properties:**
- Formally distinct from nouns?
- Form one constituent with numeral, or with noun?

The Leiden Team

- Marian Klamer (PI)
- Antoinette Schapper (Post-doctoral Researcher)

Surrey IP: Typology



Surrey IP: Typology

- Alor-Pantar languages provide an ideal testing ground for:
  - exploration of grammatical features
  - multiple factors determine morphological marking
  - significant variation among the languages

Aims and objectives

These include investigation of:

- System of pronominal affixes
- Variety of functional verbs

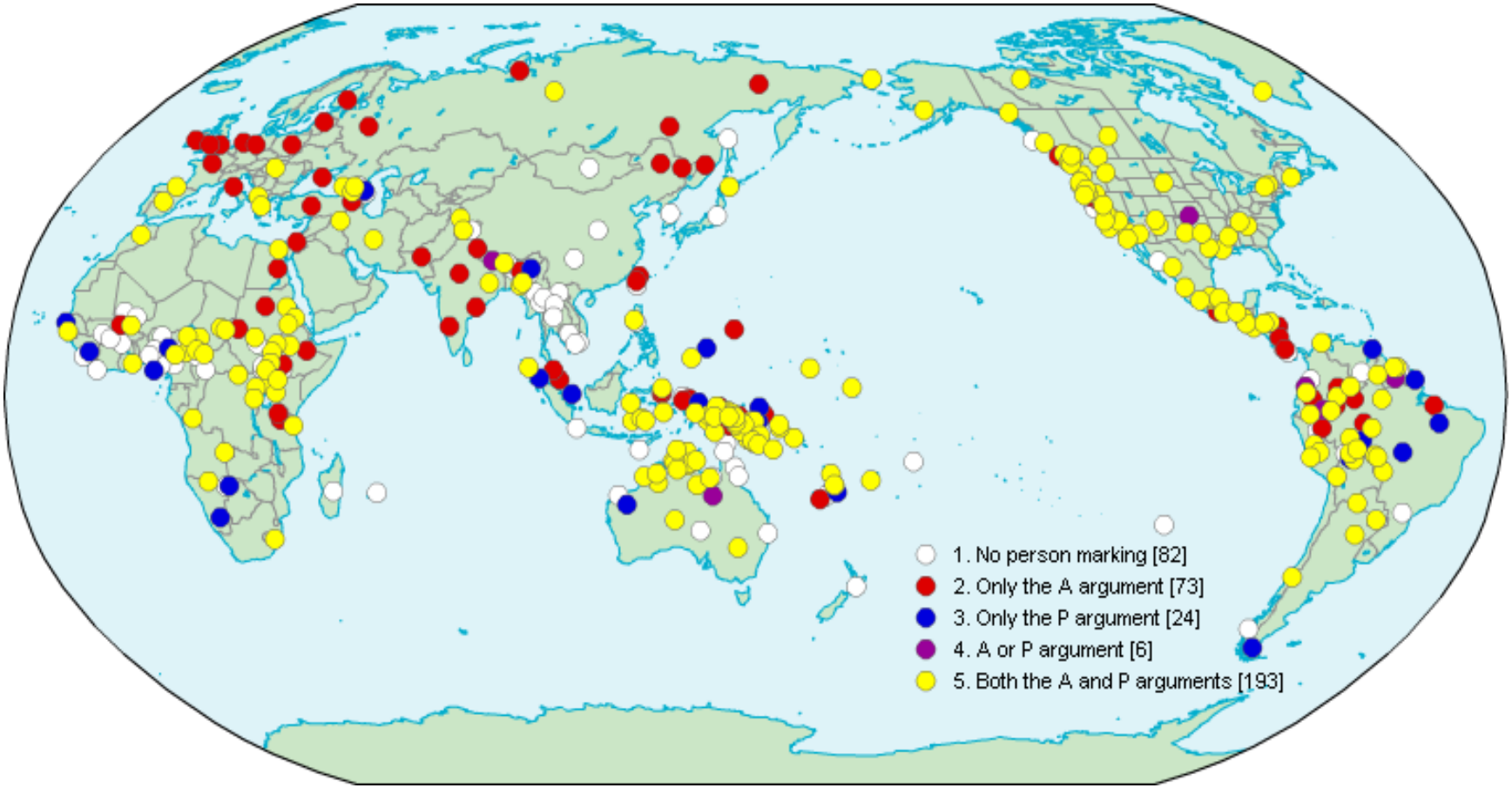
with the wider aim of understanding:

- the evolution of deterministic morphosyntax from diffuse pragmatic and semantic conditions
- the continuum between lexical word classes and grammatical features

Object marking on the verb

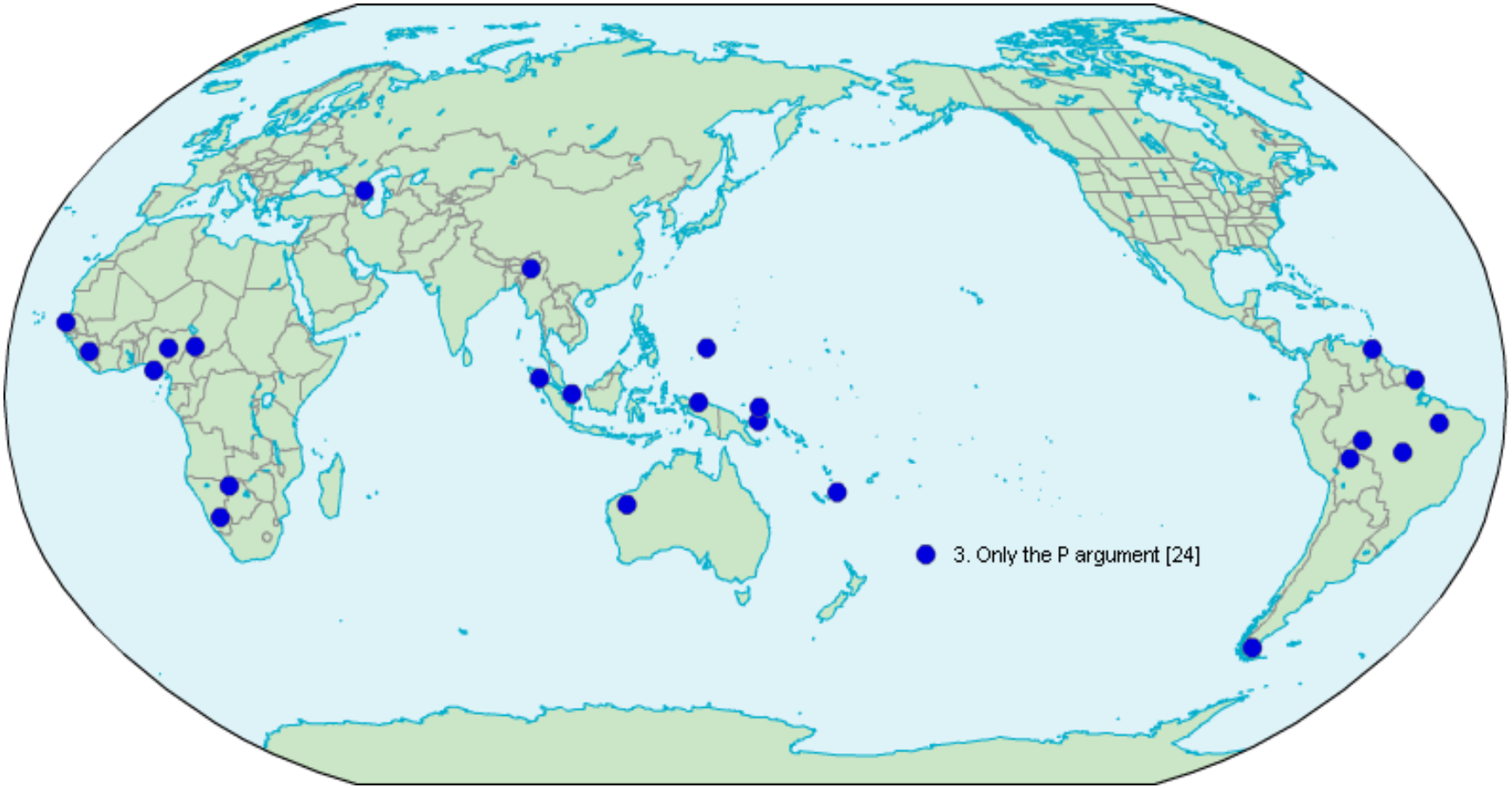
- Formal identity between possessor prefixes and grammatical object prefixes

Object marking on the verb



Siewierska (2005: chapter 102)

Object marking on the verb



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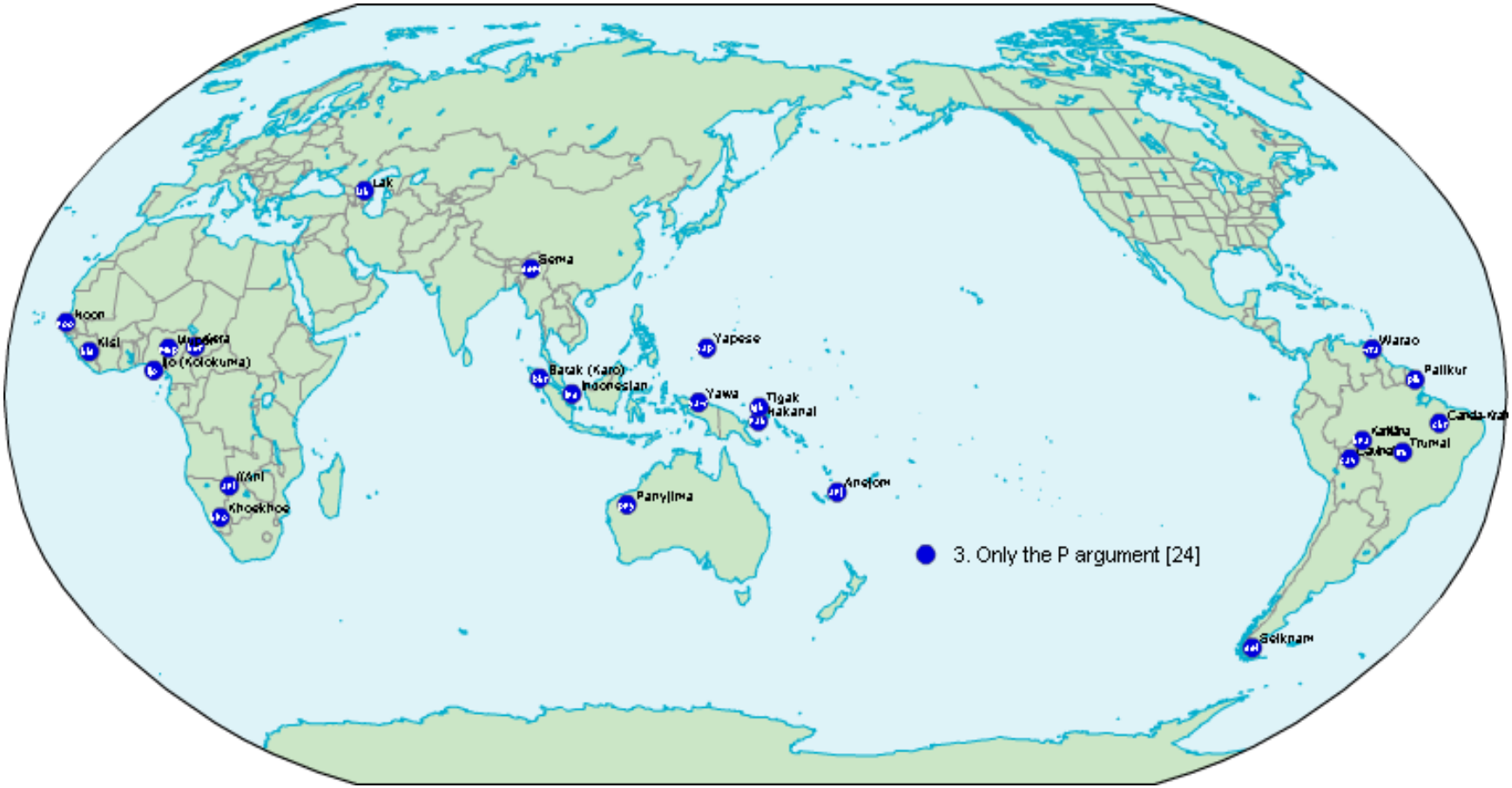
Object marking on the verb



Siewierska (2005: chapter 102)

Object prefix

A	*qavif*	*ga-uyan*	*gi*	*si...*
3	goat	3s-search	go	SIM

‘He went searching for [a] goat...’ Klamer (forthcoming: 88)

No object prefix

...i'in	*i-xaf*	*uwaad*	*la*	*boqai*	*dau-an*	*na.*
they.elsewhere	3p-fish	big	FOC	cut.up	cook-REAL	eat

'...they cut up their big fish, cooked and ate [it]'
Klamer (forthcoming: 90)

The Surrey Team

- Greville Corbett (PI)
- Matthew Baerman (Consultant)
- Dunstan Brown (CI)
- Sebastian Fedden (Post-doctoral Researcher)

3. Discussion

- What is innovative in this project?
  - New data
  - New historical connections
  - Cutting edge elicitation techniques
  - Better understanding of the area and “Papuan”
- What is most exciting?
  - From virtually no knowledge to knowledge that can inform linguistic theory in less than 10 years

Discussion

- Connections with other Eurobabel CRPs?
  - Kalahari Basin Area
  - Referential Hierarchies in Morphosyntax
- Challenges shared with other CRPs?
  - Methods to maximize team work
  - Understanding the connections between national funding bodies and ESF
  - Funding more EuroBABEL meetings

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