Austronesian etyma and Proto-Tai Sesquisyllabicity
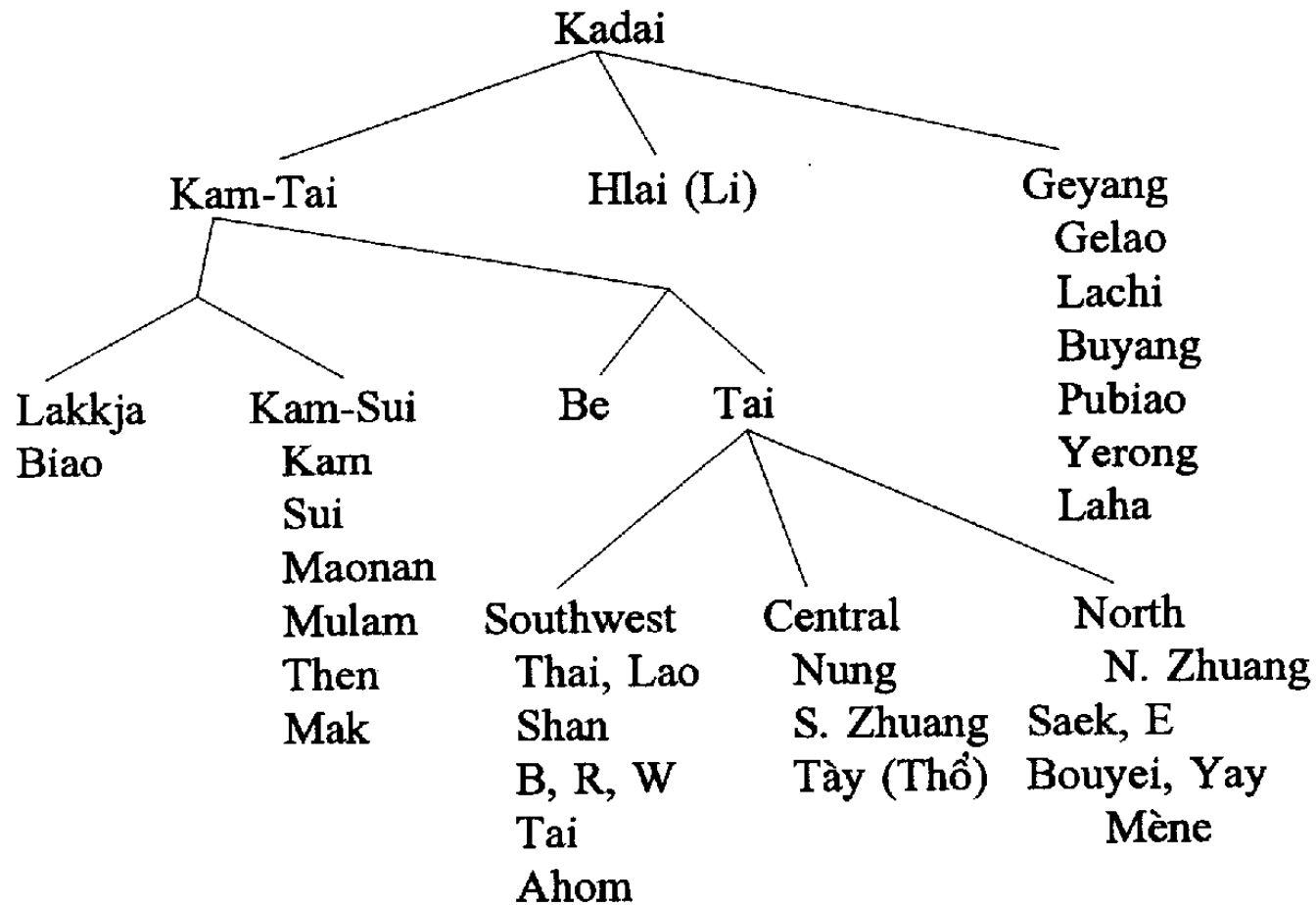
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Tai languages

- Spoken in China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar, India

Tai within Kra-Dai

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                              Kadai
              /                 |                  \
         Kam-Tai            Hlai (Li)            Geyang
          /      \           /     \             Gelao
                           Be      Tai           Lachi
   Lakkja   Kam-Sui                              Buyang
   Biao     Kam                                  Pubiao
            Sui                                  Yerong
            Maonan                               Laha
            Mulam     Southwest   Central    North
            Then      Thai, Lao   Nung         N. Zhuang
            Mak       Shan        S. Zhuang  Saek, E
                      B, R, W     Tày (Thổ)  Bouyei, Yay
                      Tai                      Mène
                      Ahom
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Austronesian and Tai

- Tai belongs to Kra-Dai (= Tai-Kadai)

- Various researchers view Kra-Dai (KD) as related to Austronesian (AN), e.g. Schlegel (1902), Wulff (1942), Benedict (1942, 1975), Sagart (2004), and Ostapirat (2005)

- Benedict (1942, 1975) proposes that AN and KD form a phylum called "Austro-Thai."

- Sagart (2004) proposes that KD is a subgroup of AN.

After Austro-Thai

- Benedict's work has been rightly criticized for its methodology and the quality of its evidence.

- Undeniable evidence (Benedict 1942, Sagart 2004, and Ostapirat 2005) for some kind of relationship.

- Lack of an adequate PT reconstruction

Some AN-Tai vocabulary

	Malay	Siamese
'eye'	mata	ta:^{A1}
'die'	matay	ta:j^{A1}
'bird'	manuk	nok^{D2}

From Benedict (1942, 1975)

Some Tai-AN typological comparisons

	Tai	AN
prosodic word	monosyllabic	polysyllabic
onset	abundant clusters	no cluster
vocalism	complex	simple
tonality	tonal	non-tonal

Issue and claim

- How does the monosyllabicity of Tai languages relate to the polysyllabicity of AN?

- Different reconstructions of PT assume different canonical word-shape without explicitly addressing the issue.

- Following Ferlus (1990), PT was in fact NOT monosyllabic, but sesquisyllabic.

Outline

- Sesquisyllabicity
- Conventional view
- PT as a sesquisyllabic language
- AN-related sesquisyllabic etyma in PT

Sesquisyllables

- A sesquisyllable (1 ½ syllable) is a prosodic word that consists of
    - an unstressed "minor" syllable

        (= ½ syllable)
    - a fully stressed "major" syllable

        (= 1 syllable)

(Matisoff 1973)

Sesquisyllables (cont.)

- The syllabicity of the minor syllable is carried by a neutral vowel or a syllabic consonant, i.e no phonological vowel in the first syllable.

- Palaung (Shorto 1960)
  - /k.tɛ:/ 'earth' pronounced [k$^{(ə)}$.tɛ:]
  - /kr̩.taʔ/ 'tongue' pronounced [k$^{(ə)}$r.taʔ]

Sesquisyllable vs. monosyllable

- A monosyllable is a word that clearly consists of one syllable.

- Palaung (Shorto 1960)
  - /taʔ/ 'to weave'
  - /kraʔ/ 'buffalo'

Sesquisyllable vs. disyllable

- A disyllable is a word that clearly consists of two syllables.

- Malay

  - /mata/ 'eye'

  - /tulaŋ/ 'bone'

  - /pinaŋ/ 'areca'

Sesquisyllabicity vs. monosyllabicity (cont.)

- Prosodic words in a monosyllabic language are predominantly monosyllabic.

- Tsat (Ouyang and Zheng 1983)
  - /pui^{33}/ 'fire'
  - /p^{h}ian^{11}/ 'moon'
  - /ta^{11}/ 'eye'

Sesquisyllabicity vs. monosyllabicity (cont.)

- Prosodic words in a sesquisyllabic language can be either monosyllabic or sesquisyllabic.

- Jarai (Lee 1966)

  - /pui/ 'fire'

  - /blan/ 'moon'

  - /m̩.ta/ 'eye' pronounced [məta]

The Chamic languages

- **Monosyllabic - Tsat**

- **Sesquisyllabic – Jarai**

- **Northern Roglai (Awơi-hathe et al. 1977)**
  - /apui/ 'fire'
  - /bila:t/ 'moon'
  - /mata/ 'eye'

Diachronic model

disyllabic

/mata/

↓

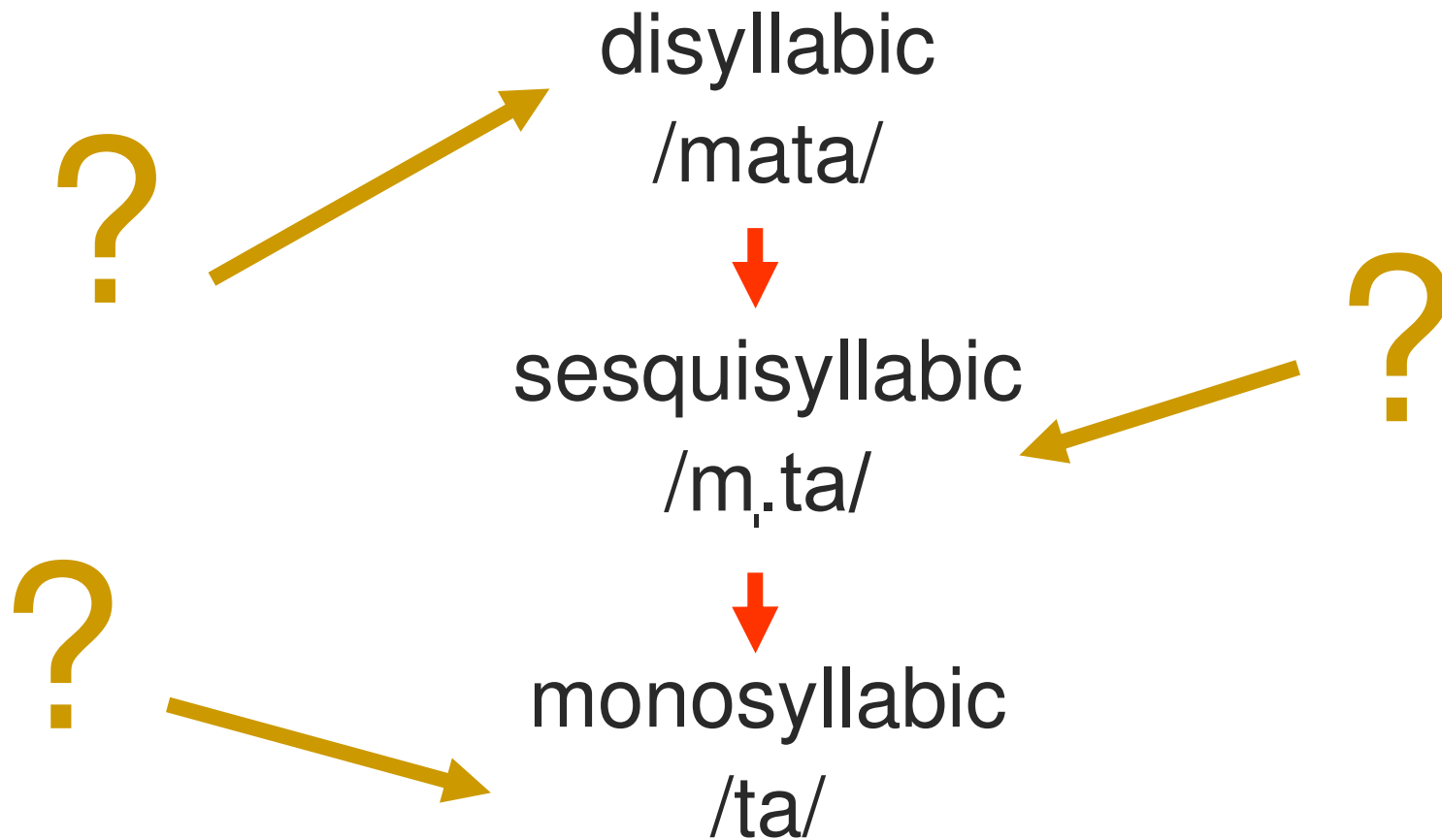sesquisyllabic

/m̩.ta/

↓

monosyllabic

/ta/

Lee (1966), Thurgood (1999)

What about PT?

- Overwhelming evidence shows that native monosyllabic etyma in modern Tai languages must have developed from larger words, cf. Lakkja, Buyang etc.

- What was the state of affair at the PT stage?

Diachronic model

disyllabic
/mata/

sesquisyllabic
/m̩.ta/

monosyllabic
/ta/

? ?

?

The conventional view

- Proto-Tai reconstruction by Li (1977)

- All PT prosodic words were strictly monosyllables.

  ○ *vɛj^A 'fire'

  ○ *ʔblɯən^A 'moon'

  ○ *tra^A 'eye'

Problem

- Many correspondences among Tai dialects unexplained, e.g.

  ○ *ˀdr- is reflected as either /r-/ or /tr-/ in Saek

  ○ *tr- has labial reflexes /pr-/ or /pʰj-/ in some dialects

Sesquisyllabicity of PT

- PT was a sesquisyllabic language, cf. Ferlus (1990).

- A PT prosodic word was either monosyllable or sesquisyllable.

- Intermediate between Kra-Dai disyllabicity/polysyllabicity and modern Tai monosyllabicity.

Crucial data (1)

		Siamese	Lungchow	Yay	Saek	Li
1	'handle'	da:m^{C1}	da:m^{C1}	da:m^{C1}	d...	*d-
	'to acquire'	da:j^{C1}	daj^{C1}	daj^{C1}	daj...	*ʔd-
	'single'	diəw^{A1}	de:w^{A1}	dew^{A1}	diəw^{A1}	
2	'red'	dɛ:ŋ^{A1}	dɛ...	diŋ^{A1}	ri:...	*ɗ- *ʰr-
	'bone'	du:k^{DL1}	du...	dok^{DL1}	rɔ...	
	'raw'	dip^{DS1}	dip^{DS1}	dip^{DS1}	rip^{DS1}	
3	'star'	da:w^{A1}	da:w^{A1}	da:w^{A1}	tra:w^{A1}	*ʔdr- *tr-
	'to transplant'	dam^{A1}	dam...	dam^{A1}	tra...	t.n-
	'earthworm'	dɯən^{A1}	dɤ:n...	dɯən^{A1}	truəl^{A1}	

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Crucial data (2)

		Siamese	Lungchow	Yay	Saek	Li
1	'to kill'	$k^h a{:}^{C1}$	$k^h a{:}^{C1}$	$ka{:}^{C1}$	ka	$*k^h{-}$
	'torn'	$k^h a{:}t^{DL1}$	$k^h a{:}t^{DL1}$	$ka{:}t^{DL1}$	ka	
	'arm'	$k^h\varepsilon{:}n^{A1}$	$k^h e{:}n^{A1}$	cen^{A1}	$ke{:}n^{A1}$	
2	'to hang'	$k^h w\varepsilon{:}n^{A1}$		n^{A1}	$ve{:}n^{A1}$	$*xw{-}$
	'face down'	$k^h wam^{C1}$	$k^h um^C$	ham^{C1}	(ηam^{C1})	
	'spirit'	$k^h wan^{A1}$	$k^h wan^{A1}$	van^{A1}	$h\mathfrak{o}n^{A1}$	
3	'leg'	$k^h a{:}^{A1}$	$k^h a{:}^{A1}$	^{A1}	kwa	$p^h{\cdot}q{-}$
	'to sell'	$k^h a{:}j^{A1}$	$k^h a{:}^{A1}$	j^{A1}	$kwa{:}j^{A1}$	

*q-

*qw-

*qw-

*q-

Crucial data (3)

		Siamese	Lungchow	Yay	Saek	Li
1	'separated'	pʰra:k^{DL2}	pja:k^{DL2}	pja:k^{DL2}	pʰra·k^{DL2}	
	'to deceive'	pʰra:ŋ^{A2}	pja:ŋ^{A2}			*br-
	'half gone'	pʰrɔŋ^{A2}	pjoŋ^{A2}	pjoŋ^{A2}	pʰrɔ:ŋ^{A2}	
2	'machete'	pʰra:^{C2}	pja:^{C2}	*ɟ-	ʰa:^{C2}	
	'late meal'	pʰraw *br-		saw^{A2}	*d-	ɟm.r-
	'tomorrow'	pʰru:k^{DL2}	pjuk^{DL2}	sok^{DL2}	tʰɔ:k^{DL2}	
3	'to hate'	cʰaŋ^{A2}	caŋ^{A2}	saŋ^{A2}	saŋ^{A2}	
	'to taste'	cʰim^{A2}	cim^{A2}	*ɟ-		*ɟ-
	'to soak'	cʰɛ:^{A2}		se:^{A2}	se:^{A2}	

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Crucial data (4)

		Siamese	Lungchow	Yay	Saek	Li
1	'vegetable'	pʰak^{DS1}	pʰjak^{DS1}	piək^{DS1}		*pʰr-
	'to walk'	pʰa:j^{C1}	pʰja:j^{C1}	pja:j^{C1}		
	'hair'	pʰom^{A1}	pʰjum^{A1}	piəm^{A1}	pʰram^{A1}	
2	'eye'			ta:^{A1}		*p.t-
	'to die'	ta.j	ha.j	ta:j^{A1}		
	'grasshopper'	tak^{DS1}		tak^{DS1}		
3	'to be exposed'		pʰja:k^{DL1}	ta:k^{DL1}	pra:k^{DL1}	*p.r-
	'to burst'	tɛ:k^{DL1}	pʰe:k^{DL1}	te:k^{DL1}		
	to hunt		pʰjaw^{B1}	taw^{B1}		

*pr-

*t-

*tr-

*pr-

*t-

*pr-

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PT as a sesquisyllabic language

- PT allowed both monosyllabic and sesquisyllabic prosodic words.
    - *ɓlɯənᴬ 'moon' (vs. Li's *ʔblɯənᴬ)
    - *wɤjᴬ 'fire' (vs. Li's *vɛjᴬ)
    - *p.ta:ᴬ 'eye' (vs. Li's traᴬ)

- Different branches became monosyllabic seperately: sesquisyllabic > monosyllabic.

Proposal

disyllabic

/mata/

sesquisyllabic

/m̩.ta/

monosyllabic

/ta/
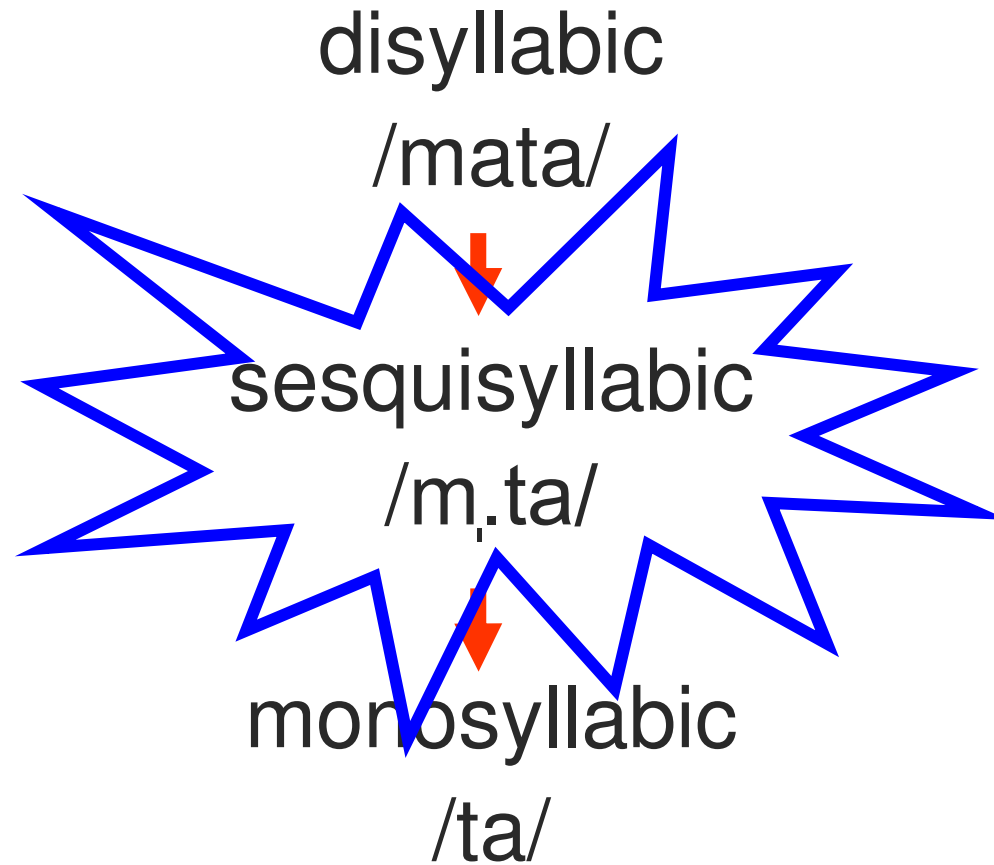
Alternative: Disyllabic

- Haudricourt (1975)

- Each PT prosodic word consisted of two syllables.
    - *mata^A 'eye' (vs. Li's tra^A)
    - *apui^A 'fire' (vs. Li's *vɛj^A)
    - *bulan^A 'moon' (vs. Li's *ʔblɯən^A)

- Less likely because different branches must have gone through two evolutionary steps separately: disyllabic > sesquisyllabic > monosyllabic.

To sum up…

- The view that PT was sesquisyllabic best accounts for comparative data.

- There were both monosyllabic and sesquisyllabic etyma in PT.

AN-related etyma in PT

- Many sesquisyllabic etyma in PT clearly have AN correspondents.

- Basic vocabulary

- Loss of vowel of first syllable

Body parts

Gloss	PT	PAN (Blust)	PAN (Wolff)
'eye'	*p.ta:[A]	*maCa	*matá
'leg'	*p.qa:[A]	(*paqa)	*páqah
'shoulder'	*Ç.ba:[C]	*qabaRa	*qabáɣa

Natural objects

Gloss	PT	PAN (Blust)	PAN (Wolff)
'water'	*Ç.nam^C	(*daNum)	*dáɬum
'moon'	*ɓlɯən^A	(*bulaN)	*bulaɬ

Animals and plants

Gloss	PT	PAN (Blust)	PAN (Wolff)
'bird'	*Ç.nok^D	(*maNuk)	*maɬúk
'centipede'	*q.sep^D	*qaluSipan	*qusalípañ
'rattan'	*Ç.wa:j^A	*quay	*qúway

Adjectives

Gloss	PT	PAN (Blust)	PAN (Wolff)
'raw'	*Ç.dip^D	*quDip	*qudip
'black'	*Ç.dam^A	*tidem	*tidem

Verbs

Gloss	PT	PAN (Blust)	PAN (Wolff)
'to die'	*p.ta:j^A	*maCay	*matáy
'to fart'	*k.tɤt^D	*qetut	*qetut
'to weep'	*t.haj^C	*taŋis	*táŋic
'to arrive'	*Ç.tɤŋ^A	(*dateŋ)	*dateŋ

Observations (1)

- Onset correspondence is quite regular
  - PT *C̥.- corresponds to PAN vcl obstruents
  - PT *p.t- corresponds to PAN *mVt-
- But why PAN *q- corresponds to
  - PT *k in *k.tɤt^D 'to fart'
  - PT *q in *p.qa:^{A} 'leg'

Observation (2)

- Vocalic transfer (Benedict 1977, Haudricourt 1975)

  - AN *bulaN > PT *ɓlɯən^A 'moon'

  - AN *taŋis > PT *t.haj^C 'to weep'

- Pre-Proto-Tai

- Pre-sesquisyllabic

Observation (3)

- ## Lower-level AN etyma
  - *ɓlɯənᴬ 'moon' < *bulaN (vs. *qiNas)
  - *C̣.nokᴰ 'bird' < *maNok
  - *t.namᴬ 'to plant' < *taNem (vs. *mula)
- ## How does this contribute to the question of genetic affiliation of KD?
- ## Does this support Sagart's claim that KD is in fact a subgroup of AN?

Conclusion

- PT was a sesquisyllabic language that had both monosyllabic and sesquisyllabic etyma.

- Many sesquisyllabic etyma clearly show Austronesian connections and point to a very close (genetic?) relation between AN and KD.

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