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APALAI KINSHIP AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

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Summer Institute of Linguistics

ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF THE

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## APALAÍ KINSHIP AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Sally Sharp Koehn

Summer Institute of Linguistics

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## APALAI KINSHIP AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

0. The purpose of this study is to set forth the terms used in Apalai<sup>1</sup> kinship relationships<sup>2</sup>, to give clarity to the terms by means of ego charts, to analyze their semantic components, and to discuss various problems encountered in the analysis and interpretation of these terms. In addition, certain aspects of behavior which correlate with kin relationships are discussed, with emphasis on the nuclear family, marriage patterns, economic groupings, and interaction within the family.

1. Kinship Terms. There are twenty-five kinship terms discussed in this paper. They are classified as to terms of reference or address. The reference terms are further classified as to terms expressing consanguineal or affinal relationships. The consanguineal terms are further classified as to their semantic components.

1.1. Chart I presents the Apalai kinship terms of reference and address used by male ego and female ego

CHART I: APALAÍ KINSHIP TERMS

Reference term <sup>3</sup>	Translation label	Denotata <sup>5</sup>		Address
		male ego	female ego	
1. y-umí <sup>4</sup>	father	F	F,FB,MSH	papa
2. y-ení	mother	M,MS,FBW, anyone M calls <u>paši'ši</u>	same	aya
3. i-mũku-ru	son	s,Bs,WSs,MSss,FBss	s,Ss,HBs,MSds,FBds	aimo <sup>6</sup>
4. ěši-rí	daughter	d,Bd,WSd,MSsd,FBsd	d,Sd,HBd,MSdd,FBdd	orímo <sup>6</sup>
5. i-pa-rí	grandchild	all second generation descendents		aimo, orímo <sup>6</sup>
6. i-rui	elder brother	EB,FEBS,MESs	#	awi'wi
7. z-akoro-ní	younger same-sex sib.	YB,FYBs,MYSS	YS (MSd,FBd-Y than ego)	kuku
8. a-oríši-rí	sister	ES,FESd,FEbd,MEbd MESd,WS,WBW	#	ši'ši
8a. a-oríši-rí	sister	YS,FYSd,FYbd,MYSD, MYbd	#	kuku
9. i-pi-rí	brother	#	EB,HB,HS, (MSs,MBs,FSs, FBs-older than ego)	pi'pi
9a. i-pi-rí	brother	#	YB (MSs,MBs,FSs, FBs-Y than ego)	kuku

CHART I: Continued

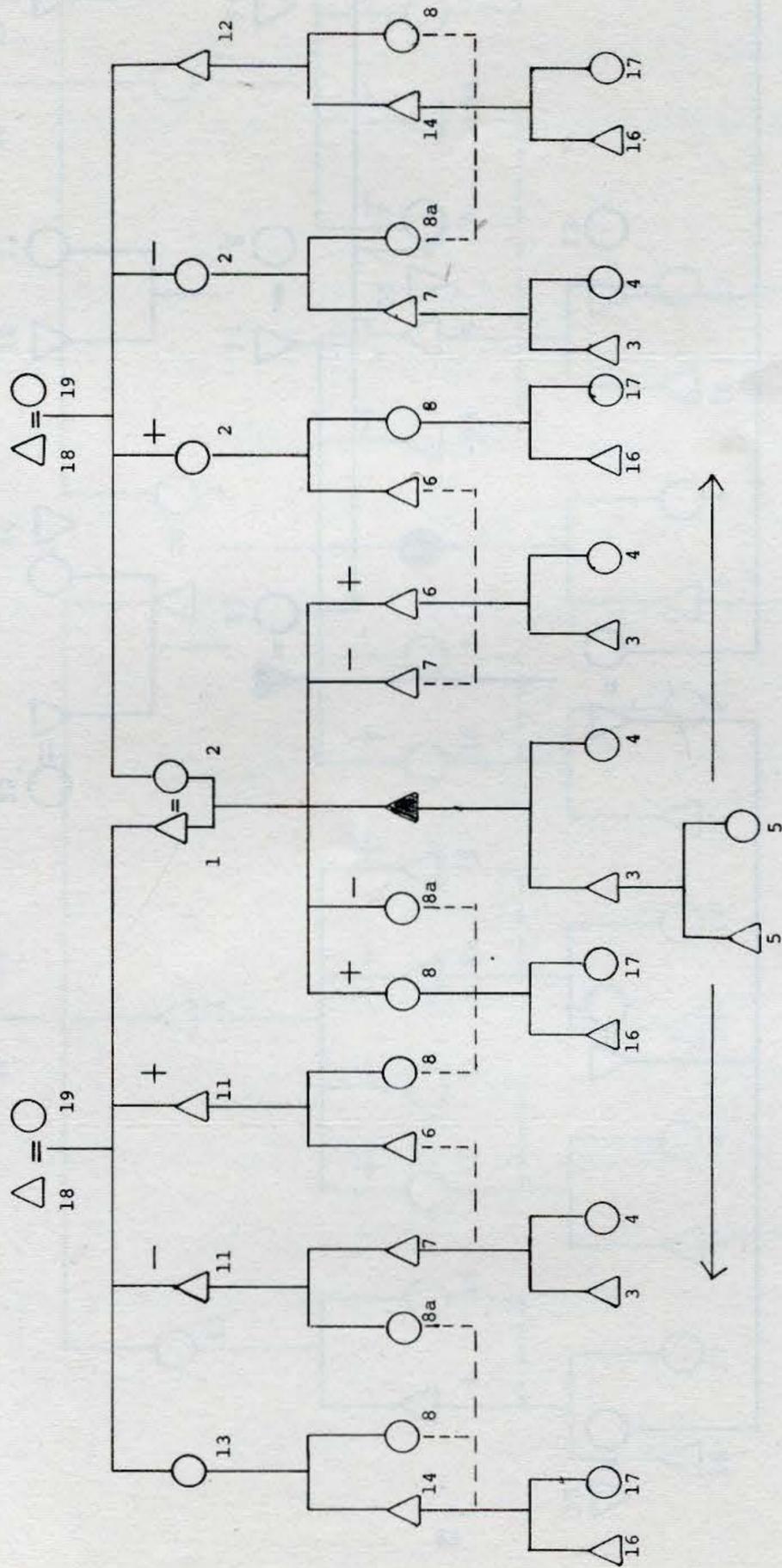
Reference term <sup>3</sup>	Translation label	Denotata <sup>5</sup>		Address
		male ego	female ego	
10. i-paši-rì	sister	#	ES (MSd, FBd, older than ego)	paši'ši
11. i-yapo'po-nì	father's brother	FB, MSH	#	yapo'po (yapo)
12. a-o-rì	uncle	MB, FSH	same	eo
13. a-o'pì-rì	aunt	FS, MBW	same	pipi
14. kono'no	cousin/brother-in-law	FSs, MBs, WB, WSH.	#	kono'no (kono)
15. y-erì-tì	cousin/sister-in-law	#	HS, HBW, MBd, FSd	etì'tì
16. i-patumì	nephew	Ss, WBs, MSds, FBds, MBds, MBss, FSds, FSss	Bs, HSs, MSss, FBss, MBds, MBss, FSds, FSss	aimo <sup>6</sup>
17. i-patìe	niece	Sd, WBd, MSdd, FBdd, MBsd, MBdd, FSsd, FSdd	Bd, HSd, MSsd, FBsd, MBdd, MBsd, FSdd, FSsd	orìmo <sup>6</sup>
18. i-tamu-ru	grandfather	MF, FF	same	tam
19. i-no-tì	grandmother	MM, FM	same	mama
20. i-nio	husband	#	H	meta, aimozumì <sup>7</sup> pi'pi
21. i-pì-tì	wife	W	#	meta, aimoenì <sup>7</sup> ši'ši

CHART I: Continued

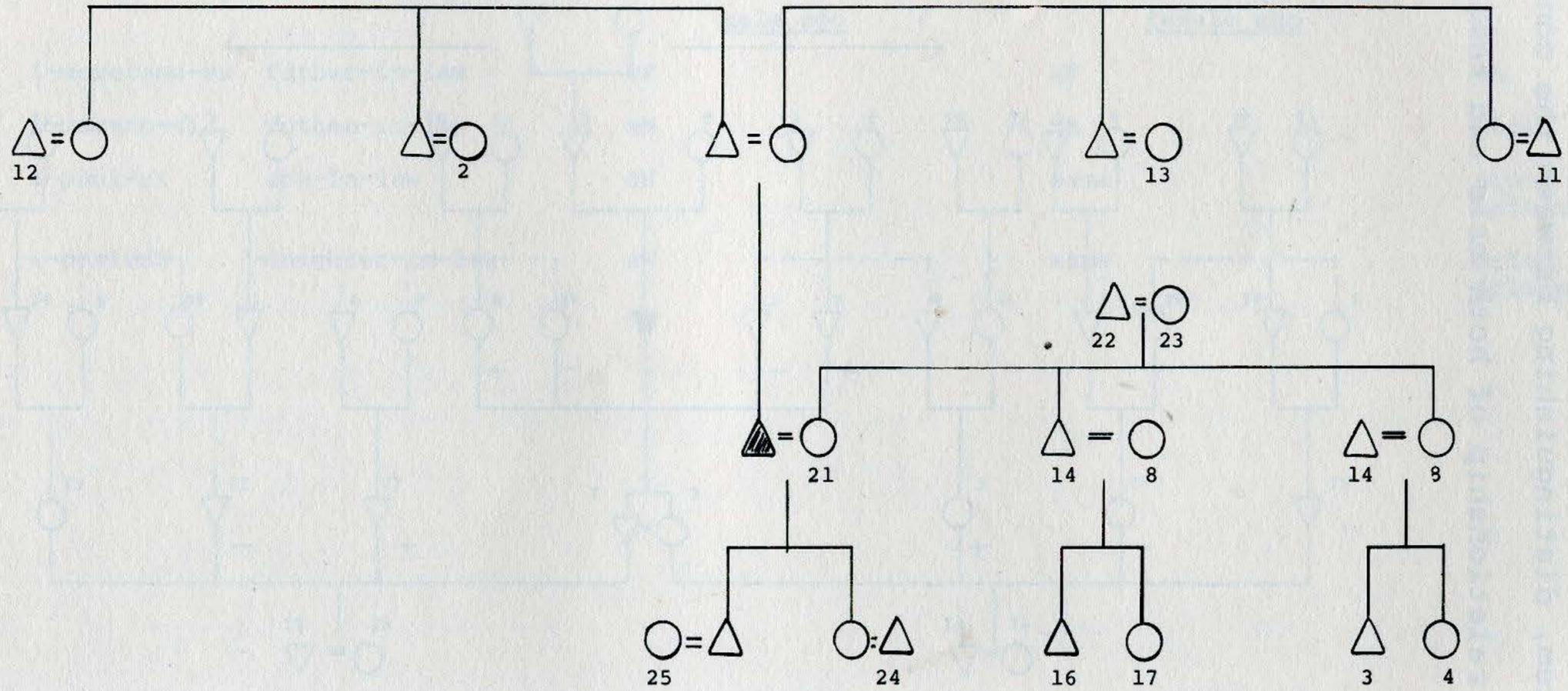
	<u>Reference</u> <sup>3</sup>	<u>Translation label</u>	<u>Denotata</u> <sup>5</sup>		<u>Address</u>
			<u>male ego</u>	<u>female ego</u>	
22.	i-meretamu-ru	father-in-law	WF	HF	eo
23.	i-mereno-ti	mother-in-law	WM	HM	pipi
24.	i-pani-ri	son-in-law	dH	same	aimo, aimozumfi <sup>7</sup> orimozumi
25.	i-parienĩ	daughter-in-law	sW	same	orimo, aimoeni <sup>7</sup> orimoeni

1.2. The following four charts diagram the Apalaí kinship system, distinguishing between the consanguineal and affinal relationship of both male and female egos.

1.2.1. CHART II: MALE EGO CONSANGUINEAL<sup>8</sup>

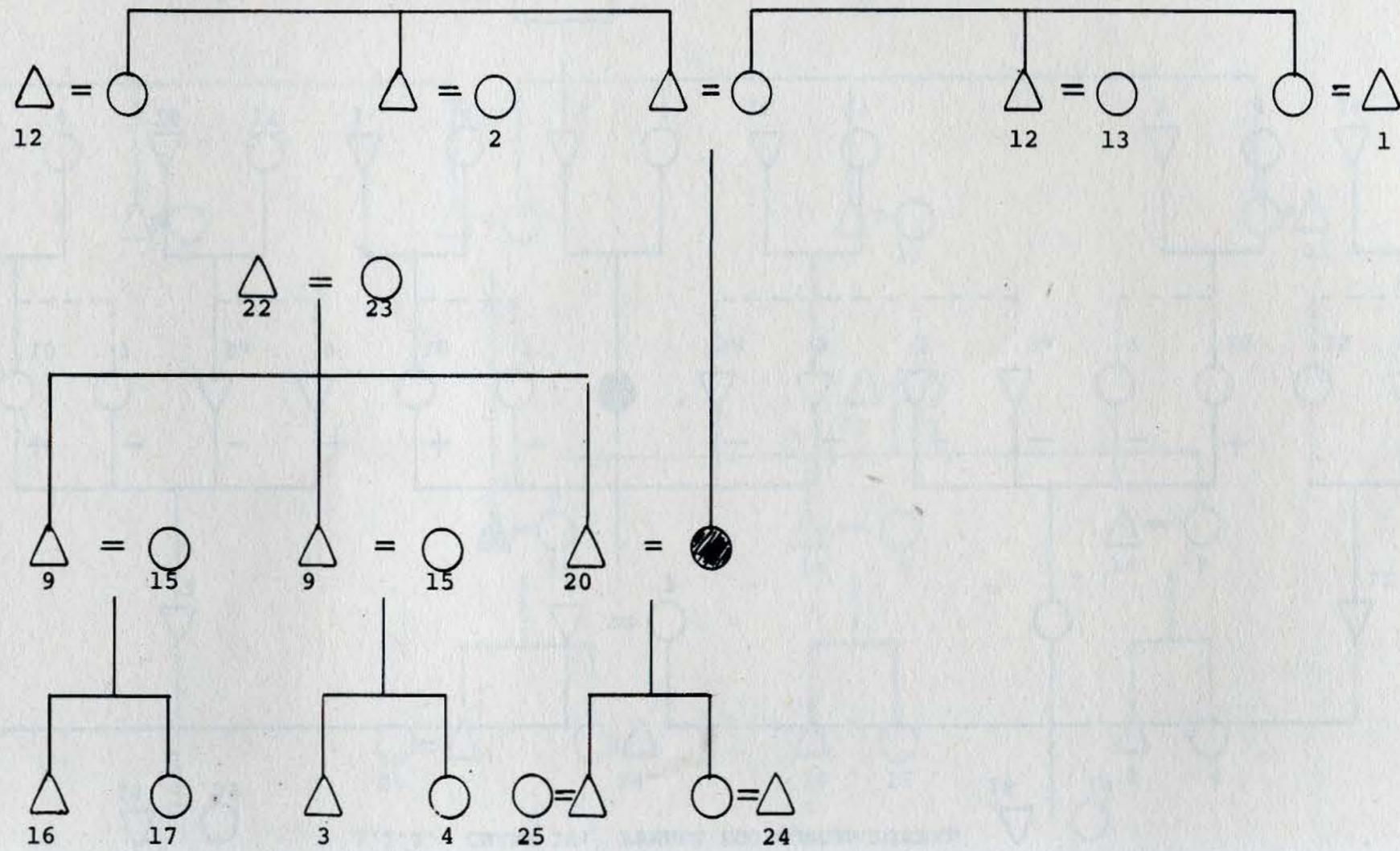


1.2.2. CHART III: MALE EGO AFFINAL





1.2.4. CHART V: FEMALE EGO AFFINAL



1.3. Componential Analysis. The present componential analysis is limited to the consanguineal reference system of Apalaí kinship.

1.3.1. Semantic Dimensions. The following six semantic dimensions are sufficient to distinguish every Apalaí kinship term from every other in the reference consanguineal system. Abbreviations, as given at the end of each discussion of dimensions, will be employed in the formulae to follow.

1) Generation. Every term specifies the generation of the kinsman with reference to ego. The abbreviations used: ego = G; first ascending =  $G^1$ ; second ascending =  $G^2$ ; first descending =  $G^{-1}$ ; second descending =  $G^{-2}$ .

2) Sex of kinsman. All terms with the exception of two, specify the sex of the kinsman. Ambiguity as to sex with the term zakoroní is relieved by noting the sex of ego. The term ipari is ambiguous as to sex. Abbreviations used: male =  $\sigma$  ; female =  $\rho$  .

3) Relative age. Certain kinsmen are further distinguished according to their age in relation to ego or according to the relative ages of certain relatives. Relative age of siblings is reckoned with respect to ego's age. Relative age of ego's parents' siblings is reckoned with respect to parents' ages. Age of male ego's male parallel<sup>9</sup> cousins is reckoned with respect

to relative age of male parallel cousins' parents to male ego's parents. Age of female ego's female parallel cousins is reckoned with respect to relative age of female ego. (See section 1.4. for discussion.) Abbreviations used: older=+; younger=-.

4) Direct versus oblique. Certain kinship terms distinguish direct or oblique relations with reference to ego. The following direct relations are recognized. The divisions correspond to the generation involved.

- Direct =
1. parents and their same-sex siblings.
  2. ego's same-sex siblings and same-sex parallel cousins.
  3. offspring of ego and offspring of 2.

The following oblique relations are recognized:

- Oblique =
1. parents' opposite-sex siblings.
  2. ego's opposite-sex siblings, opposite-sex parallel cousins, and all cross<sup>9</sup> cousins.
  3. offspring of 2.

These relations do not completely correspond with the parallel and cross relations recognized in marriage preferences (See section 2.2. for discussion.) It is also of interest to note that spouse's same-sex siblings' offspring are in direct relation to ego. All other af-

final kin are in oblique relationship. Abbreviations used: direct = D; oblique = O.

5) Sex of ego. Some terms are used only by men speakers; others are used only by women, thus indicating the sex of the speaker. Abbreviations used: male = m; female = f.

6) Collaterality. This component is significant to male ego only and is used to distinguish male relatives of the first ascending generation. Ancestors signify lineal; other relations are colateral. Abbreviations used: lineal = L; colateral = C.

1.3.2. The following formulae denote the semantic components of the reference terms as they relate to the schematic chart.

$$\begin{aligned} 1) \text{ yumi} &= mG^1 \sigma^1 L \\ &= fG^1 \sigma^1 D \end{aligned}$$

$$2) \text{ imeretamuru} = \text{affinal}$$

$$3) \text{ imerenoti} = \text{affinal}$$

$$\begin{aligned} 4) \text{ zakoroní} &= mG \sigma^1 D^- \\ &= fG \sigma^1 D^- \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} 5) \text{ imũkuru} &= mG^{-1} \sigma^1 D \\ &= fG^{-1} \sigma^1 D \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} 6) \text{ ěširi} &= mG^{-1} \sigma^1 D \\ &= fG^{-1} \sigma^1 D \end{aligned}$$

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 7) ipatumĩ = mG <sup>-1</sup> ♂ O<br>= fG <sup>-1</sup> ♂ O | 16) yerĩtĩ = fG♀ O               |
| 8) ipatĩe = mG <sup>1</sup> ♀ O<br>= fG <sup>1</sup> ♀ O    | 17) inio = affinal               |
| 9) iyapo'ponĩ = mG <sup>1</sup> ♂ DC                        | 18) yenĩ = G <sup>1</sup> ♀ D    |
| 10) irui = mG♂ D <sup>+</sup>                               | 19) aorĩ = G <sup>1</sup> ♂ O    |
| 11) kono'no = mG♂ O   | 20) ao'pĩrĩ = G <sup>1</sup> ♀ O |
| 12) aorĩširĩ = mG♀ O  | 21) itamuru = G <sup>2</sup> ♂   |
| 13) ipĩtĩ = affinal   | 22) inotĩ = G <sup>2</sup> ♀     |
| 14) ipirĩ = fG♂ O   | 23) ipanirĩ = affinal            |
| 15) ipaširĩ = fG♀ D   | 24) iparĩenĩ = affinal           |
|   | 25) iparĩ = G <sup>-2</sup>      |

1.3.3. Schematic Chart. The following illustrates the essential semantic dimensions of the reference terms. Each term appears only once with the exception of the term for younger same-sex sibling. The dotted divisions illustrate dimensions which are of secondary importance. Such a dimension is significant for address terms, but not for reference terms.

The lacunae in the chart are created by the placement of aorĩširĩ and ipirĩ in the oblique category. A term has not been found in man's speech to differentiate between male parallel cousin and male cross cousin.

The decision, therefore, to analyze aorĩširĩ and ipirĩ in oblique relation to ego is based on the kin terminology used for their offspring. Ego's cross cousin offspring are termed ipatumĩ and ipatĩe. In addition,

the offspring of ego's opposite-sex parallel cousin and opposite-sex sibling likewise are termed ipatum'i and ipatie. Whereas, the offspring of ego, ego's same sex siblings, and ego's same sex parallel cousins are imūkuru and ěšir'i. (See section 2.2.)

CHART VI  
SEMANTIC DIMENSIONS OF  
REFERENCE TERMS

			D		O	
			m	f	m	f
G	♂	+	irui		kono'no	----- ipiri
		-	zakoron'i			
	♀	-		zakoron'i	aoriširi	----- yeriti
		+		ipasiri		
G-1	♂	imūkuru			ipatum'i	
	♀	ěšir'i			ipatie	
G1	♂	C		yumi	aori	
		iyapo'pon'i				
	♀	yeni			ao'piri	
G2	♂	itamuru				
	♀	inoti				
G-2	ipari					
	-----					

1.4. Discussion of Terms and Problems with Terms. In eliciting kin terms the genealogical method<sup>10</sup> was used to the extent possible. However, the availability of living representatives of the kin terms was quite limited. Dead relatives' names are seldom spoken. Therefore, holes were filled in by eliciting data with a phrase similar to "If so-and-so had a child, brother, wife, sister, etc., what would he/she call him...?" This proved satisfactory especially if the referents and kin were represented by stick figures on paper.

Special notice was taken of the difference in information from women and men. The woman informants insisted that age rank is relative only on one generation level and not on ascending or descending levels. This information is shown on the ego charts in reference to parallel cousins; that is: if MSd is older than ego, than she is called elder sister regardless of MS in relation to the age of M. However, male informants insisted that age rank is relative to descending generations; that is: if MS is older than M, than MSs will be called elder brother regardless of his age relative to ego. If FB is younger than F, then FBs will be called younger brother by ego.

The information difference between men and women is illustrated by the following situation: The son of the younger of parallel cousins was born a year prior

to the son of the elder of parallel cousins. The older boy addresses the younger boy as awi'wi, elder brother. This is the only incident observed of rank relevant to the 2nd descending generation. When the mother of the older son was consulted, she replied that her son calls his younger cousin kuku, younger brother, because of their relative ages to each other. This illustrates the female concept of relative age as different from the male concept.

One incident of yapo'po being used by a female speaker was encountered. A young girl who had not reached puberty referred to her mother's sister's former husband as yapo'po. An older woman was questioned at the time and replied that the young girl could use the term because she had not become "accustomed" with the implied meaning she had not reached puberty, at which time she would refer to him as papa. However, in questioning married women concerning kinship terms, yapa'po was always given as a term used by male speakers only.

Terms of technonymy are used as terms of politeness. A man can call his wife either his aoriširi or his iparieni "mother of the boy" or "mother of the girl". The converse is true. When a woman has given birth to a female child, she is called "mother of the girl". If a later child is a boy, then she becomes "mother of the boy". If her first born is a son, she retains her name "mother of

the boy" even though subsequent children are girls. There are exceptions, but this generally holds true.

1.5. Other Terms Indicating Relationships.

1.5.1. -mani. The suffix -mani is used with terms of reference for ego's stepparent relationship. aya-mani, "my stepmother"; papa-mani, "my stepfather".

1.5.2. nĩmirĩ. The word nĩmirĩ means "genuine" and distinguishes genuine versus extended relationships such as: aoriširi nĩmirĩ, "his real sister" distinguished from his parallel cousin.

1.5.3. epe. The term epe, "friend", is used of outsiders (non-relatives) or visitors from other countries unless they are adopted into the kinship system. It also implies a business relationship of merchandise trading.

The Apalaĩ have adopted some outsiders into their culture to a certain extent, namely, that of giving kinship terms to them. The term men give to men on the same generational level is kono'no, "cousin". The term men give to women is ši'ši, "sister". The women call adopted women relatives paši'ši, "sister", and adopted men relatives pi'pi, "brother".

## 2. Social Behavior.

2.1. Residence Groups. In general the villages consist of nuclear family groupings with one or two closely related families per village. The families usually are matrilocal. The daughter, upon marriage, continues to live in the mother's house until children are born. If their own house is completed prior to the birth of the first born, the couple will move from the mother's; if there is no completed house, the couple will wait until the first born is 8 to 12 months old.

There are cases of patrilocal residence when the wife lives in the village of her husband's relatives.

If a woman has no daughters, she lives with her sons.

It is considered quite uncommon for a daughter to live away from her mother. Foreigners are often asked about their mothers--where she lives, why she hasn't accompanied them, etc.

2.2. Marriage Patterns. Preferred marriage seems to be polygamous with two spouses. The combination preferred is mother and daughter or two sisters. A lack of congruence is seen between kin terms and preferred or permitted custom patterns. Bilateral cross cousin marriages are preferred. Marriage of parallel cousins is considered incestuous. No term has been found to differentiate between parallel and cross cousin opposite-sex to ego.

An interesting polygynous combination is that of a grandmother and her granddaughter. The young girl has not reached puberty but seems to be in a different role than that of apprentice described below (she is not an orphan). She is a companion to the man, accompanying him on long trips when the older wife remains at home.

Often a girl prior to puberty, if an orphan, is given to a man as his wife. Her role is that of a virtual slave or apprentice to his present wife.

Wife swapping as well as divorce is quite common in the culture. Children seem to give the marriage stability.

There are two recorded cases of polyandry. The combinations are of a man and his nephew and of two brothers. In the former there were no children born. In the latter case there are two living children and there seems to be no confusion as to their fathers. This marriage has since dissolved with the death of the elder brother. The younger brother traded wives, taking his wife's youngest sister.

2.3. Economic Groupings. The Apalaí are very individualistic especially in their economic relations with their kin. Sons assist fathers in canoe and house building prior to, more than after, marriage. Brothers do not help each other in private enterprises, nor do sisters. There are community projects at festa time, the women work together making the drink, but each fills her own containers; the

men cut the field, but each cuts his own portion. Visitors share in cutting portions of the chief's field and planting, but the portion and produce are the visitor's own. Thus the economic relationship of this type of transaction is based more on social rather than kin influence.

In the past sons-in-law worked for their father-in-law, making his field, his canoe, and his house. A man was said to be wealthy if he had daughters, thus potential sons-in-law as workers. If a daughter-in-law lived in her husband's village, she gathered and grated the manioc for her mother-in-law's cassava bread. The writer has not observed these customs at present.

2.4. Behavioral Correlates. Apalaí practice infanticide when the newborn is deformed or when the child is unwanted. The child is either clubbed, left a few hours to die, or is buried alive. If a mother dies in childbirth, the baby is buried with her.

When a second child is born, the first child, if still quite young (2 to 5 years old), is given to the maternal grandmother to care for. He sleeps, eats, and travels with her. His father or mother care for his economic needs and pay for his medicines.

Where a mother and stepfather situation occurs, the child lives with his mother but his economic needs are met by his father, if still alive and near at hand.

Otherwise payment for medicines or trade items is given by the mother. If the child is female, her father is in the same village, and he is widowed, she cleans his fish, picks his chiggers, takes her bath with him--is very close to him as a daughter and companion.

If a woman is widowed or her husband is absent, she gathers her own food. If she is sick, her sister or mother takes some responsibility for her.

If a man is widowed, his daughter or his brother's daughter cares for him, preparing his food, weaving his hammock, hanging his hammock, and seeking medicine for him when he is sick. He lives in the house of his brother's daughter if she is married. If he has no daughter, then his sister cares for him.

A child is disciplined by his mother or father. Discipline consists of laughing; threatening to ask the medicine man to perform a ceremony; teasing; ignoring until crying becomes unbearable and then giving in; rubbing peppers in the eyes; beating with a stick; threatening to ask the foreigner to treat with medicine; chasing the child into the jungle with no real intent to catch--only to scare.

Though FB is in direct relation to ego, a boy is often given to either paternal or maternal uncle to train. If a child is orphaned his uncle is responsible for him.

One interesting transaction was recorded. A boy was orphaned suddenly. His maternal uncle took him. Shortly afterward his paternal uncle wanted him to rear. The paternal uncle traded his son for the nephew. This relation lasted almost a year before trading back. The cause of the return is not known.

One young boy who was fatherless was taken from his mother by his married stepbrother. This proved a very unhappy experience for the boy and he was returned.

On occasion a girl (unorphaned) is given to her future mother-in-law to rear and train for her son. One girl observed was about 3 years old; her father was dead and her mother was soon to remarry.

A younger brother is obligated to give to his elder real brother whatever he asks without expecting payment. A younger brother must pay for purchases from an elder brother. We see, therefore, the function of the distinction between elder and younger in the kin terms. This distinction, however, is not rigidly observed, and proves to illustrate the changing culture. Exchanges between brothers-in-law are paid for.

The patriarch, the oldest male of the village, is highly respected. He usually is the chief. He can be the medicine man. When he is all three, his influence is all encompassing: he governs trade transactions, work transactions, and marriage transactions.

It is reasonable to assume that earlier in the history of the culture the role relationships corresponded more closely with the semantic components of the kin terms, especially the component of direct versus oblique. Probably FB, because his kin term is in direct relation to ego, was the relative to exercise paternal care over him. It is likely that MS shared a more prominent role in ego's activities. There was, no doubt, a more rigid observance of respect due to relative age.

The Apalaí culture patterns, then, at this stage of cultural flux, are not completely congruent with semantic components of kinship terminology.

<sup>1</sup>The Apalaí language is spoken by some 100 persons living along the Parú River in the northeastern part of the state of Pará in Northern Brazil. Data for this study were gathered during field work conducted in the years 1962-1965, in conjunction with my husband, Edward Henry Koehn, under the auspices of the Museu Nacional of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in accordance with its contract with the Summer Institute of Linguistics. The tribal work was facilitated by the assistance of the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios. For information on Apalaí phonology and noun structure (viz., possessive affixes) see: Edward and Sally Koehn, Notas Sobre a Língua Apalaí

(in process of publication by the Museu Paraense Emilio Goeldi, Belém, Brazil.)

I am indebted to Judith Shapiro for her help in the organization of the data. The original purpose of the paper was to write up the data as collected and make it available for further analysis. With the encouragement of my husband and the valuable suggestions of my colleague, David Fortune, I was able to attempt an analysis of the data. In addition I am indebted to Dr. David Bendor-Samuel for his supervision and help throughout the writing of this paper and to Dr. Ivan Lowe for his suggestions.

<sup>2</sup>yekiri "relative" is a general term that is applied to both consanguineal and affinal relatives. It is often used in stating that a person has no more living relatives or that a person is traveling to visit relatives in general. However, yekiri can have a specialized meaning, especially used by a person undergoing recent bereavement. If all real brothers and sisters are dead, then he says he is all alone--no relative left. At a later date he speaks of having relatives (parallel or cross cousins, etc.).

<sup>3</sup>Following is a list of reference terms with regularly formed possessive prefixes:  
Consonant initial stems other than z have the following prefixes:

ĩ-	1st person	ĩ-no-tĩ
o-	2nd person	o-no-tĩ
i-	3rd person	i-no-tĩ
kĩ-	1st incl	kĩ-no-tĩ

o initial stems may have the following prefixes:

w-	w-orĩši-rĩ
#-	orĩši-rĩ
a-	a-orĩši-rĩ
ku-	ku-orĩši-rĩ

a initial stems may have the following prefixes:

y-	y-akoro-nĩ
~-	ākoro-nĩ
z-	z-akoro-nĩ
ku-	ku-akoro-nĩ

e initial stems may have the following prefixes:

y-	y-ěši-rĩ
o-	o-ěši-rĩ
#-	ěši-rĩ
ku-	ku-ěši-rĩ

z initial stems have the following prefixes:

ĩ-	ĩ-zerĩ-tĩ
o-	o-zerĩ-tĩ
y-	yerĩ-tĩ
kĩ-	kĩ-zerĩ-tĩ

Following is a list of reference terms with irregularly formed possessive prefixes:

papa	father, my father
omĩ	your father
y-umĩ	his father (absence of free possessor)
z-umĩ	his father (with free possessor)
k-umĩ	our (incl) father
aya	mother, my mother
asa	your mother
y-enĩ	his mother (absence of free possessor)
enĩ	his mother (with free possessor)
kĩ-se	our (incl) mother
pipi	aunt, my aunt
e-o'pĩrĩ	your aunt
a-o'pĩ-rĩ	his aunt
kua-o'pĩ-rĩ	our (incl) aunt
eo	uncle, my uncle
e-o-rĩ	your uncle
a-o-rĩ	his uncle
ku-o-rĩ	our (incl) uncle

(See the above mentioned paper for other examples.)

<sup>4</sup>All reference forms are cited with morpheme breaks marked by hyphens. The prefix in each case refers to a

grammatical marker which occurs with many possessed forms.

<sup>5</sup>Abbreviations employed in section 1.1.; f = female; m = male; F = father; M = mother; S = sister; B = brother; d = daughter; s = son; E = elder; Y = younger; H = husband; W = wife; sib = sibling.

<sup>6</sup>Various terms of address are employed for children. The division is roughly: birth to 3 years, male: yamo, female: so'po; 3 years to adult, male: aimo; 3 to 8 years, female: o'po; 8 years to adult, female: orimo.

<sup>7</sup>See section 1.4. page 5 for discussion of terms of technonymy.

<sup>8</sup>In charts II through V the following conventions are used: + = older, - = younger in an intra generational level; ----- (broken line) denotes that the same term is used for offspring. Numbers refer to terms in Chart I.

<sup>9</sup>Parallel cousins as defined by marriage laws are: FB children; MS children. Cross cousins are FS children; MB children.

<sup>10</sup>Genealogical method as described in Notes and Queries on Anthropology is that of listing the names of an informant's relatives and then eliciting from the informant the term he uses to address the relative. The term was then repeated in a sentence about the named relative and the informant corrected the term of address to that of term of reference.