Robert Blust, one of the world’s leading experts on Austronesian languages, considers just these five sets of forms sufficient to prove that Malay and Hawai’ian are related. Note that it is the consonants in these forms that are important; further, note that the vowels have not affected the consonants in any way.

What is it about this data that leads him to that conclusion? In connection with this question, think about whether or not these words are likely to be borrowed.

If there were (and, there isn’t) a pair of words such as Malay mita ‘horse’ and Hawai’ian mita ‘bird’, what effect would that have on the analysis? Why? Why not?

Finally, if a pair of non-borrowed words with the forms Malay mati ‘dog’ and Hawai’ian mati ‘dog’ existed (they do not!), would the forms cause difficulties for the comparative method?