Skou

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Location
Immediately east of Jayapura, near the Papua New Guinea border. 700+ speakers, actively used by most age groups. Diglossic in Malay.

Location of Skou

Phonology
A rather skewed system, with too many vowels, odd consonantal distribution, and lots of supersegmental stuff

Segments

Phonotactics: (C)V, strict, and 5/6 of the time there is a C. This is usually the length of a word, too.

Supersegmental

H, L, LH, LHL, HL, ĤL, H L, all word level tones; restriction: no LH unit assigning to a single syllable (=TBU), leading to only a three-way contrast on monosyllables. Contrastive nasalisation on vowels (-ng). The different pitch patterns, on words of one to three syllables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-σ</th>
<th>2-σ</th>
<th>3-σ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pa 'house'</td>
<td>lengfi 'black'</td>
<td>lengbangbang 'sandfly'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pa 'water'</td>
<td>nongpong '4'</td>
<td>rangwae 'axe'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* nake 'dog'</td>
<td>mabiri '24'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* pangbi 'pig arrow'</td>
<td>kungpae 'spider, octopus'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pa 'cull house'</td>
<td>hengtong '3'</td>
<td>kukufla 'quick'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>? fungli 'scorpion'</td>
<td>arole 'gnemon, tulip'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* (?) hingtung '2'</td>
<td>nahipa '8'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When two roots are compounded together the tonal specification of the final element of the compound is spread over the whole word; the two tones do not interact. For instance, the general classifier for flying creatures is tàng 'bird', which has a high pitch, [|–ifen dent-]. The name of a large bat species is tangóe, with [|––] pitch. This is assumed to be the result of the H tone melody of ‘bird’ being overwritten by a LH melody that is associated with the specifier -oe ‘bat species’. The process can be modelled as follows:

(1)  \( \begin{array}{c}
   \leftarrow t \sigma \sigma \\
   \sigma \\
   H \\
   [\text{bird}]
\end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{c}
   t \sigma \sigma \\
   \sigma \\
   H L H
\end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{c}
   t \sigma \sigma \\
   \sigma \\
   H L H
\end{array} [\text{species}]

A trickier example:

(2)  \( \begin{array}{c}
   \leftarrow a \sigma \sigma \sigma \\
   \sigma \\
   H L \\
   [\text{aibika}]
\end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{c}
   a \sigma \sigma \sigma \\
   \sigma \\
   H L
\end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{c}
   a \sigma \sigma \sigma \\
   \sigma \\
   H L
\end{array} [\text{aibika leaves}]

Word order

Clausal

TOP S O V OBL

(3)  \[ \begin{array}{c}
   \leftarrow A ñl \end{array} \begin{array}{c}
   [p yá-ne-nì=ne] \\
   \end{array} \begin{array}{c}
   ke=yú-yú.
\end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{c}
   ke=yú-yú.
\end{array} \begin{array}{c}
   \text{father sister-1SG.DAT-1SG.GEN=1SG.DAT 3SG.NF=search-RED}
\end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{c}
   \text{Father is looking for my sister.}
\end{array} \]


(4) [S Re-ké=ke] ke=ti [OBL Jāwung].
father-3SG.NF.GEN=3SG.NF.DAT 3SG.NF=3SG.NF.go Nyao
‘His father went to Nyao.’

(5) [TOP [P Yá-ne-nì=ne=ra=ing a] ], [A ǎì] ke=yú-yú
sister-1SG.DAT-1SG.GEN=1SG.DAT=also=the father 3SG.NF=search-RED
‘Father is looking for my sister too.’

NP
POSS’R N(-POSSESSIVE) ADJ RC DEM PRAG

Verbal morphology

Agreement

Double marking for subject: SUBJ=SUBJ-V

(6) ni=e ne=n-e
mé=m-e e=e
ke=k-e te=t-e
pe=p-e
‘I/You/He/She/We/You lot/They went eastward.’

Underlying prefixes:

(7) SG PL
1 Ø, k-, n- n-
2 m- Ø-
3.NF k- t-, y-
3.F p-

Combinations of prefixes and verbs with different onsets:

(8) vocalic bilabial alveolar -l alveolar -r velar glottal

1SG e wí na lùng re ké ha
2SG me pí na pùng me bê ma
3SG.NF ke wí na lùng ti ké ka
3SG.F pe wí na rùng te wé wa
1PL ne wí na rùng ne ké na
2PL e wí na lùng re ké ha
3PL te wí na rùng re ké ya

‘go east’ ‘get.F’ ‘teach’ ‘go’ ‘get’ ‘walk’
Table 1. Underlying prefixes and phonological conjugations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocalic</th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>Ø- + V</td>
<td>Ø- + l</td>
<td>Ø- + k</td>
<td>Ø- + h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k- + V</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n- + V</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>m- + V</td>
<td>m- + l</td>
<td>m- + k</td>
<td>m- + h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p- + V</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p- + 1</td>
<td>p+ k</td>
<td>p+ h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>n- + V</td>
<td>n- + l</td>
<td>n- + k</td>
<td>n- + h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>Ø- + V</td>
<td>Ø- + l</td>
<td>Ø- + k</td>
<td>Ø- + h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>t- + V</td>
<td>t- + 1</td>
<td>t+ k</td>
<td>t+ h</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Object marking on the verb by vowel change:

Table 2. Inflection of the verb *fue* ‘see’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A \ P</th>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2SG</th>
<th>3SG.NF</th>
<th>3SG.F</th>
<th>1PL</th>
<th>2PL</th>
<th>3PL</th>
<th>3PL.NF</th>
<th>3PL.F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td><em>fue</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.NF</td>
<td><em>fue</em></td>
<td><em>fue</em></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG.F</td>
<td><em>fue</em></td>
<td><em>fue</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Clearly ‘They saw her’ will code the verb with the feminine form *fu*. We can also see that there are a total of four forms involved, *fue*, *fu*, *fi* and *fe*. I propose that we can best think about the selection of the appropriate form according to the following set of features assigned to each form, in addition to the lexical specification that is common for all forms of the verb for ‘see’:

Table 3. Features associated with the separate vowel-differentiated forms of ‘see’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F (3)PL</th>
<th>ANI</th>
<th>OBJ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fe</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fu</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fue</em></td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

That is, the form *fi* is specified only as bearing the feature PL, *fu* only bears the feature ‘feminine’, and *fue* itself is unmarked for any grammatical information. The frequently-occurring *fe* is highly specified, annotated for the features plural, animate, and object.
TAM

morphological: low tone is past tense

(9) [hɔ̀ kãːkãː]  [hɔ̀ kãːkãː]
    \[\ \ . \ . \ . \]  \[\ \ . \ . \ . \]
    ‘He’ll pound sago.’ ‘He punded sago.’

synthetic: serialisations

Tone of the verb is replaced with L tone

(10) Kõe  ing  te=r-a.
baked.sago the 3PL=3PL-roast
    ‘They roasted the sago.’

Reduplication

(11) Kõe  ing  te=r-á-rá.
baked.sago the 3PL=3PL-roast-RED
    ‘They will roast the sago.’

Reduplication and serialisation with ‘do’

(12) Kõe  ing  te=r-á-rá  ti
    baked.sago the 3PL=3PL-roast-RED 3PL.do
    ‘They want to roast the sago.’
Serialisation with ‘be’ and ‘do’

(13) \(K\text{o}e\)\(\text{ing}\)\(te=r\text{-}á\)\(e\)\(tî\)
baked.sago the 3PL=3PL-roast-RED 3PL.be 3PL.do

‘They are roasting the sago.’

NP morphology

Cases/Adpositions

• instrumental: \(=\text{pa}\)

(14) \(P\text{e}[\text{INSTR} nî=\text{pa}]\)\(hôe\)\(pe=tue\)
3SG.F stirring.spoon=INSTR sago she:do

[\text{[BEN}\text{áì-ké}=\text{ke}].
father-3SG.NF GEN=3SG.NF DAT
‘She’s preparing sago for father with a stirring spoon.’

(15) \(P\text{e} hôe nî\)\(p\text{a}\)\(p\text{e} tue\)\(áì kê\)\(ke\).

(16) \(P\text{e} nî\)\(p\text{a}\)\(hôe\)\(p\text{e} tue\)\(áì kê\)\(ke\).

• ergative: \(=\text{pro}\)

(17) \([AY\text{á-ne-nî}=\text{ne}\)\(p\text{e}]\)\(áì\)\(p\text{e}=\text{yu}yú\).
Sister-1SG.DAT-1SG.GEN=1SG.DAT 3SG.F ERG father She:search.for
‘My sister is looking for father.’

(18) *\([S\text{Áì\)ke}]\)\(ke=tî\)\([\text{OBL}Jâwung}\).
father 3SG.NF.ERG 3SG.NF=3SG.NF go Nyao
‘Father went to Nyao.’

• gender and pronouns

Possession

Alignment

Nominal/Verbal alignment
Nominal: (erg)/abs
Verbal: nom/(acc)

References


23 Ke balèngtung

DEMONS

These night wanderers are reportedly much fewer now that in former times, resulting in a change in architecture: modern houses now have a more open style, as there is less danger of demons and ghouls wandering in at night.

(1) *Ke=balèngtung*,

3SG.NF=demon

‘Demons, …’

(2) *ne=moeng (a)na=we moeng ti*,

1PL=sit like=this sit 1PL.do

‘we sit, like this we’d be sitting, …’

(3) *ke=toe ana ke=bà*,

3SG.NF=3SG.NF.come like 3SG.NF=person

‘and he comes in the form of a man, …’

(4) *túpa ke=toe ne=fue-fue ti*.

perfect 3SG.NF=3SG.NF.come 1PL=see-RED 1PL.do

‘just like one, and when he comes, we can see him.’

(5) *Ke=balèngtung*,

3SG.NF=demon

‘Demons, …’
(6)  èpa na,
‘if you dream, …’

(7)  ke=ing  ke=balèngtung.
3SG.NF=DEIC 3SG.NF=demon
‘that demon, …’

(8)  Te=balèngtung ne=fe ne ti.
3PL=demon 1PL=see.PL 1PL.be 1PL.do
‘we see the demons.’

Table 2. Linguistic structural differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>V morph.</th>
<th>NP case?</th>
<th>sonorants</th>
<th>clusters?</th>
<th>vowels?</th>
<th>Gender?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skou</td>
<td>s=s-V/o</td>
<td>(ERG)</td>
<td>r, l</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>7, (ë, õ)</td>
<td>fem, n-fem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyao</td>
<td>s-V</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>8 (ë, ẹ, ọ)</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wutung</td>
<td>s-V</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>8 (ë, ẹ, ọ)</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumo</td>
<td>s-V</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1 ([r])</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>8 (ë, ẹ, ọ)</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dusur</td>
<td>s-V</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>8 (ë, ẹ, ọ)</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leitre</td>
<td>s-V</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1 ([r])</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>7 (ë, ọ)</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dutch

*oto*  
< *auto* [ɔtɔ] ‘car, vehicle’

Malay

*kurù*  
< *guru* ‘teacher’

*kopi*  
< *kopi* ‘coffee’ (ultimately < Dutch *koffie*)

*lémong*  
< *limun* ‘lemon’

Tok Pisin

*tàngmio*  
< *tamiok* ‘axe’ (ultimately < English *tomahawk*)

Hokkien (Southern Min Chinese)

*(pa)tá*  
< *ta* ‘tea’