

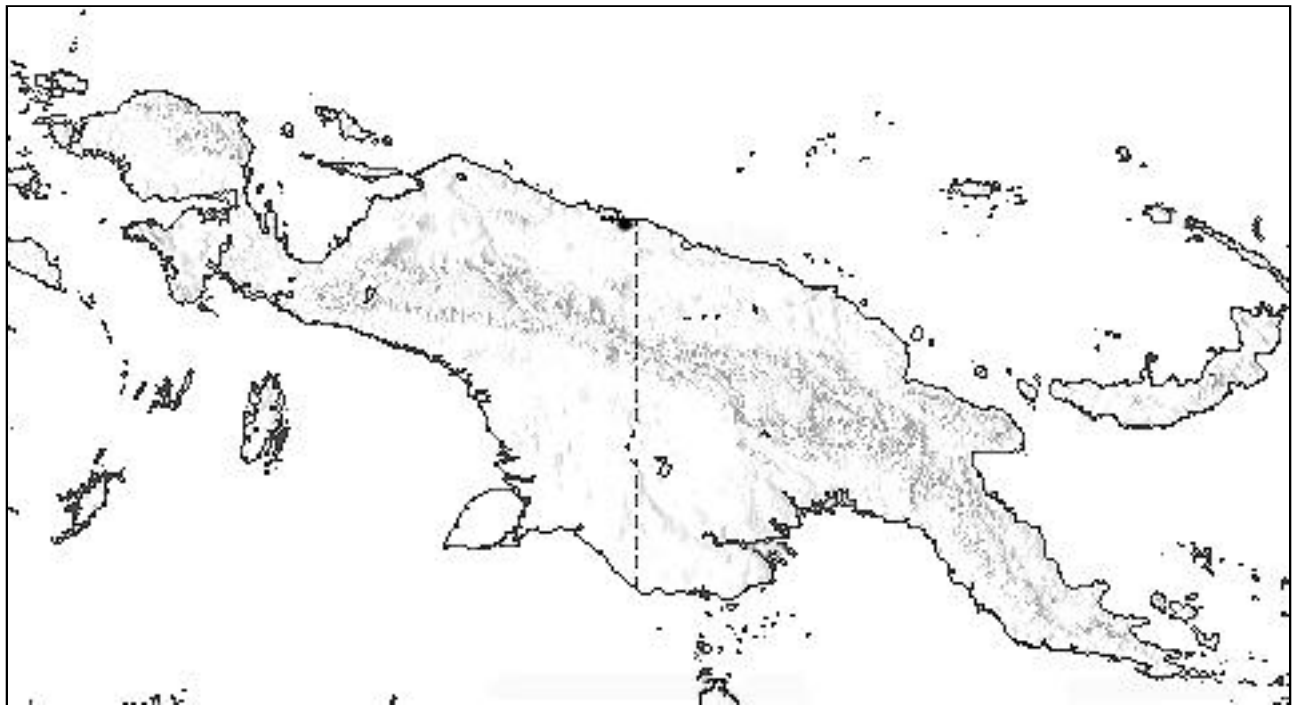
Skou

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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

p	t	k	i	u	ĩ	ũ
b	j ~ qj		ø		ẽ	õ
m	n		e	o	ẽ	õ
f		h	a		ã	õ
w	r l y					

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

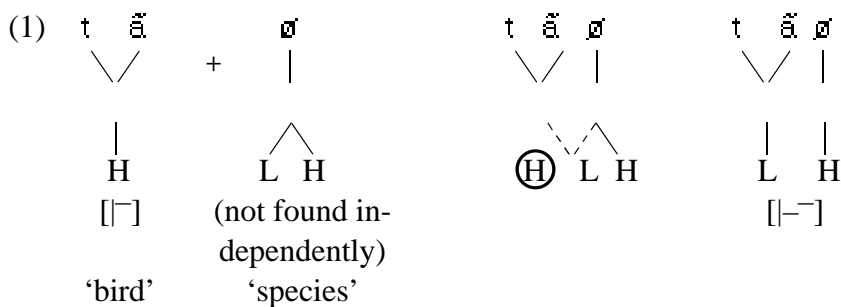
Examples: *naké* 'dog', *ròebi* 'head', *nò* 'hand', *táng* 'bird'.

Supersegmental

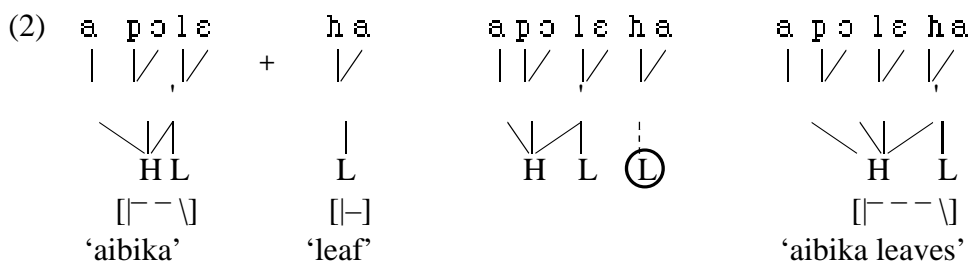
H, L, LH, LHL, HL, HĀ, ĤL, all word level tones; restriction: no LH unit assigning to a single syllable (=TBU), leading to only a three-way contrast on monosyllables. Contrastive nasalisation on vowels (-ng). The different pitch patterns, on words of one to three syllables:

1-	2-	3-	
<i>pa</i> 'house'	<i>lengfi</i> 'black'	<i>lengbangbang</i> 'sandfly'	H
<i>pa</i> 'water'	<i>nongpong</i> '4'	<i>rangwaue</i> 'axe'	L
*	<i>nake</i> 'dog'	<i>mabiri</i> '24'	LH
*	<i>pangbi</i> 'pig arrow'	<i>kungpaue</i> 'spider, octopus'	LHL
<i>pa</i> 'cult house'	<i>hengtong</i> '3'	<i>kukufa</i> 'quick'	HL
?	<i>fungli</i> 'scorpion'	<i>apole</i> 'gnemon, tulip'	HĀ
* (?)	<i>hingtung</i> '2'	<i>nahipa</i> '8'	ĤL

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 *táng* 'bird', which has a high pitch, [H]. The name of a large bat species is *tangóe*, with [LH] 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:



A trickier example:



Word order

Clausal

TOP S O V OBL

- (3) [A Áì] [P yá-ne-nì=ne] ke=yú-yú.
 father sister-1SG.DAT-1SG.GEN=1SG.DAT 3SG.NF=search-RED
 'Father is looking for my sister.'

Table 1. Underlying prefixes and phonological conjugations

	vocalic	bilabial	alveolar	velar	glottal
1SG	∅- + V = V k- + V = k n- + V = n	∅- + w = w	∅- + l = l	∅- + k = k	∅- + h = h k- + h = k
2SG	m- + V = m	m- + w = p, m	m- + l = p	m- + k = b	m- + h = m
3SG.NF	k- + V = k	k- + w = w	k- + l = l, t	k- + k = k	k- + h = k
3SG.F	p- + V = p	p- + w = w, p	p- + l = r, t, w, p	p- + k = w	p- + h = w
1PL	n- + V = n	n- + w = w	n- + l = r, t, l	n- + k = k	n- + h = n, b
2PL	∅- + V = V	∅- + w = w	∅- + l = l	∅- + k = k	∅- + h = h
3PL	t- + V = t	y- + w = w	t- + l = r, t, l y- + l = j, y	t- + k = k y- + k = j	t- + h = t y- + h = y, j

Object marking on the verb by vowel change:

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

A \ P	1SG	2SG	3SG.NF	3SG.F	1PL	2PL	3PL	3PL.NF	3PL.F
1SG		<i>fue</i>	<i>fue</i>	<i>fu</i>		<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fu</i>
2SG	<i>fue</i>		<i>fue</i>	<i>fu</i>	<i>fe</i>		<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fu</i>
3SG.NF	<i>fue</i>	<i>fue</i>	<i>fue</i>	<i>fu</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fu</i>
3SG.F	<i>fu</i>	<i>fu</i>	<i>fu</i>	<i>fu</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fu</i>
1PL		<i>fue</i>	<i>fue</i>	<i>fu</i>		<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fu</i>
2PL	<i>fue</i>		<i>fue</i>	<i>fu</i>	<i>fe</i>		<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fu</i>
3PL	<i>fi</i>	<i>fi</i>	<i>fi</i>	<i>fu</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>fu</i>

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’

	F	(3)PL	ANI	OBJ
<i>fe</i>	.	+	+	+
<i>fi</i>	.	+	.	.
<i>fu</i>	+	.	.	.
<i>fue</i>

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.

Figure 1. Vowel alternations and the feature [feminine]

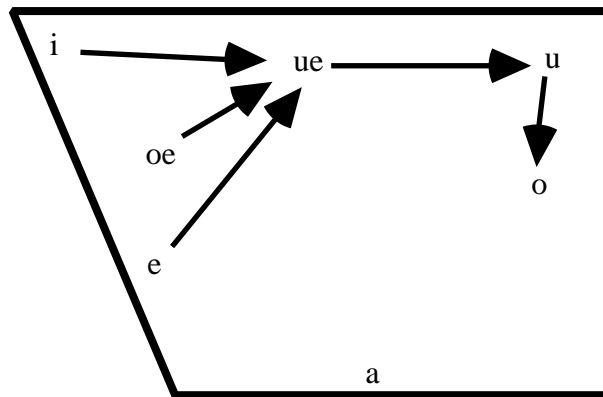
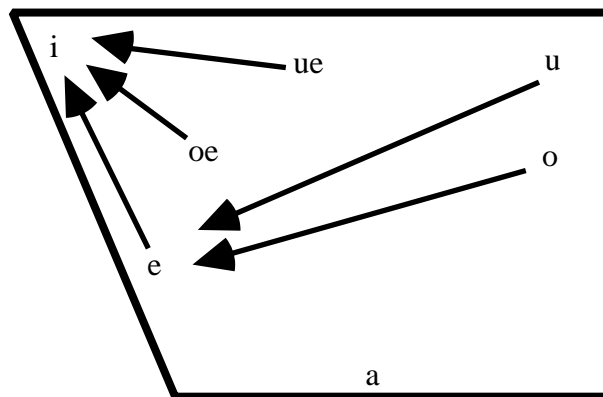


Figure 2. Vowel alternations and the feature [plural]

**TAM**

morphological: low tone is past tense

- (9) [hø kakaka] [hø kaka]
 [\ . - -] [\ . -]
 'He'll pound sago.' 'He punded sago.'

synthetic: serialisations

Tone of the verb is replaced with L tone

- (10) *Kóe* *ing* *te=r-a.*
 baked.sago the 3PL=3PL-roast
 'They roasted the sago.'

Reduplication

- (11) *Kóe* *ing* *te=r-á-rá.*
 baked.sago the 3PL=3PL-roast-RED
 'They will roast the sago.'

Reduplication and serialisation with 'do'

- (12) *Kóe* *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) *Kóe ing te=r-á e tí*
 baked.sago the 3PL=3PL-roast-RED 3PL.be 3PL.do
 ‘They are roasting the sago.’

NP morphology

Cases/Adpositions

- instrumental: =*pa*

- (14) *Pe [INSTR ní=pa] hòe pe=tue*
 3SG.F stirring.spoon=INSTR sago she:do
 [BEN *âi-ké=ke*].
 father-3SG.NF.GEN=3SG.NF.DAT
 ‘She’s preparing sago for father with a stirring spoon.’

(15) *Pe hòe ní pa pe tue âi ké ke.*

(16) *Pe ní pa hòe pe tue âi ké ke.*

- ergative: =*pro*

- (17) [_A *Yá-ne-nì=ne* *pe*] *âi pe=yúyú.*
 sister-1SG.DAT-1SG.GEN=1SG.DAT 3SG.F.ERG father She:search.for
 ‘My sister is looking for father.’

- (18) * [_S *Ái ke*] *ke=ti* [_{OBL} *Jáwung*].
 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)

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23 Ke balèngtung

DEMONS

These night wanderers are reportedly much fewer now than 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,*
dream or
'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

	V morph.	NP case?	sonorants	clusters?	vowels?	Gender?
Skou	s=s-V/o	(ERG)	r, l	–	7, (ʔ, ø)	fem, n-fem
Nyao	s-V	–	r	some	8 (i, e, o)	–
Wutung	s-V	–	l	many	8 (i, e, o)	–
Dumo	s-V	–	l ([r])	some	8 (i, e, o)	–
Dusur	s-V	–	l	some	8 (i, e, o)	–
Leitre	s-V	–	l ([r])	–	7 (e, o)	–

Dutch

oto < *auto* [ɑːtɔː] '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'