

2. YAPESE: A BRIEF SKETCH

This chapter is designed as a short introduction to the Yapese language for those readers who may not be familiar with Jensen et al.'s *Yapese Reference Grammar* (1977a, henceforth YRG) or *Yapese-English Dictionary* (1977b, YED). I begin with a brief history of the language and some observations on its current use. I then present an exhaustive review of previous linguistic scholarship on this language. After some remarks on the data considered and fieldwork methodologies employed in the current work, I finish this chapter by presenting a short sketch of select aspects of the grammar for the benefit of readers who are not familiar with Yapese or with typical properties of Austronesian languages.

1. Yapese: History and Current Status

Yapese is spoken on the islands of Yap, at the western edge of the Micronesian archipelago. It currently has just over 5 000 speakers (FSM Division of Statistics 2002).¹ The designation 'Micronesian' is problematic and variable. Geographically, Micronesia refers to the archipelago in the western Pacific that stretches from Palau in the west to Kiribati in the southeast. The chain is mostly spread out along an east-west axis, with the Marianas lying in a north-south chain toward the western end, and the Gilberts describing a southerly curve at the eastern end. Politically, the archipelago includes several sovereign nations, including the Federated States of Micronesia, which encompasses the member states of Yap, Truk, Pohnpei and Kosrae. Strictly speaking, Micronesian languages are those which belong to the Greater Micronesian subgroup (Jackson 1983, 1986), which includes Nauruan, the languages of the Gilberts and the Marshalls, and all of the languages of the Federated States with the

exception of Yapese and the Polynesian outliers (Nukuoro and Kapingamarangi). Neither Chamorro (Guam) nor Palauan are Micronesian languages.

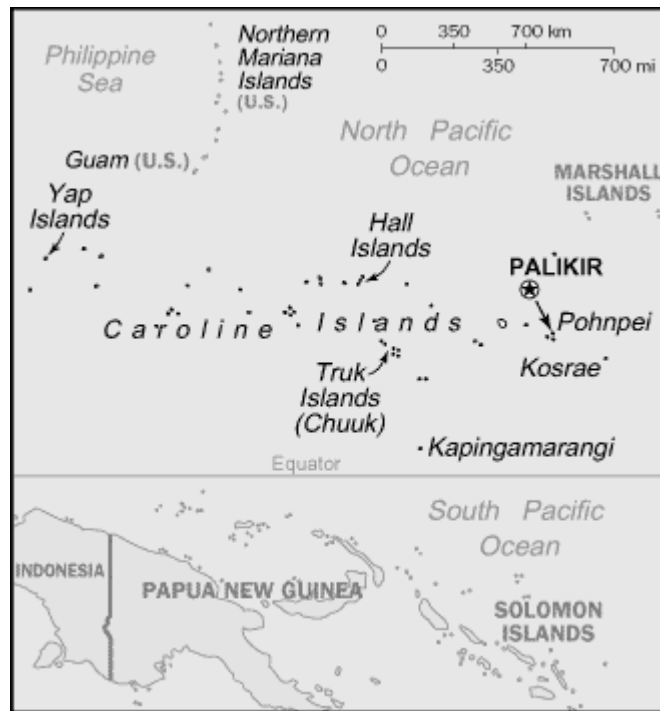


Figure 1: The Micronesian Archipelago
 (Courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin)

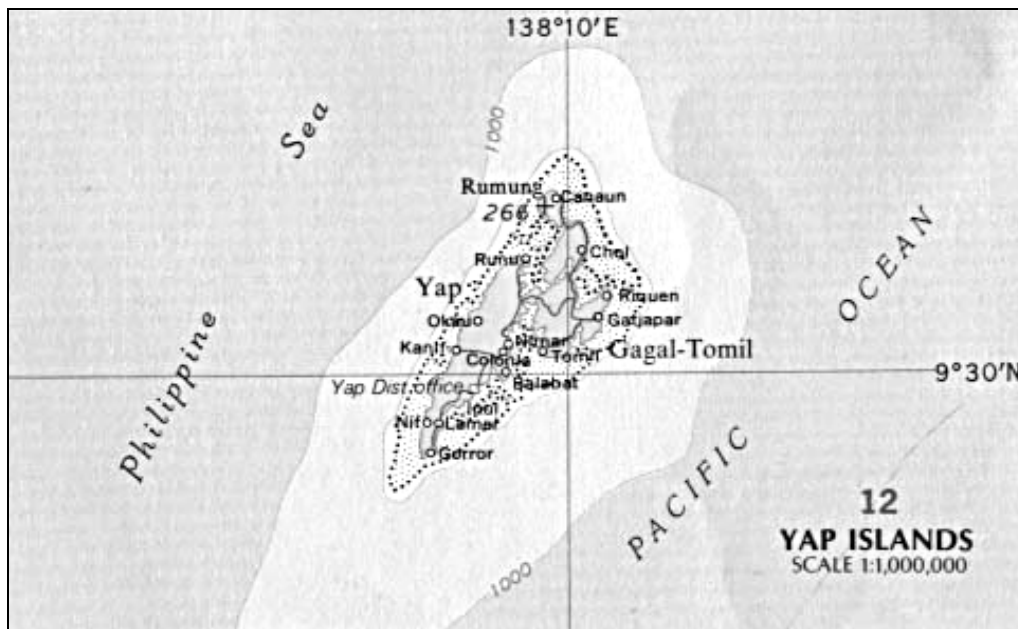
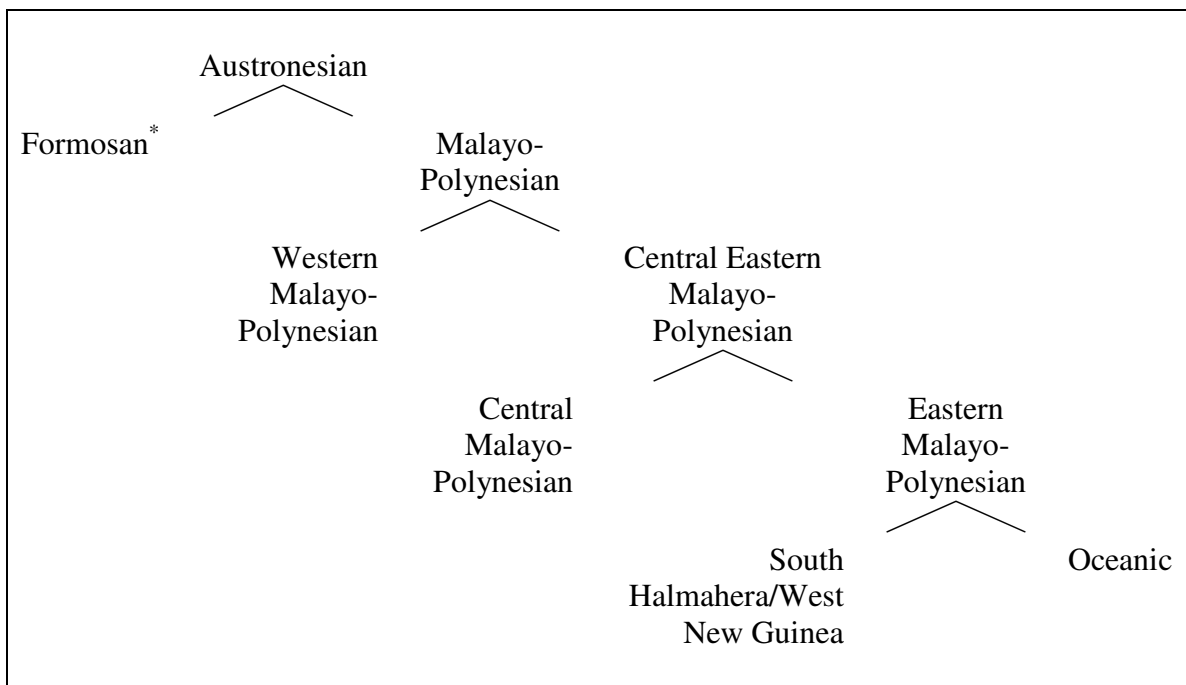


Figure 2: Yap Proper
 US National Atlas 1970 (Courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin)

Four closely-spaced islands make up what is commonly known as Yap Proper: Yap, Tomil-Gagil, Maap and Rumung. Yap State includes this group as well as numerous outer islands, including Ulithi, Fais, Woleai, Ifalik, Lamotrek and Satawal. Yapese is spoken on the islands of Yap Proper (Fig 2).

Yapese has long been difficult to classify. It is incontrovertibly a member of the Malayo-Polynesian family, the sub-group of Austronesian which includes all of the languages outside of the ancestral proto-Austronesian homeland, Taiwan (see Blust 1988 for the arguments pointing to a Taiwanese homeland). The Malayo-Polynesian family exhibits a binary branching structure at its higher nodes (see Fig 3).



*This should be read as shorthand for the various Formosan languages, which do not constitute a subgroup.

Figure 3: The Higher Nodes of the Austronesian Family Tree
(Ross (1988:20), see Blust 1978, 1982, 1984 for argumentation)

The difficulty of classifying Yapese stems from the fact that it has borrowed extensively, and due to its geographical location, has borrowed from both Oceanic and non-

Oceanic languages (Ross 1996). To the southeast, beginning at Ulithi, a chain of islands stretches into the Truk archipelago. As far east as Nauru, the majority of Yap's neighbors speak genetically Micronesian languages, which constitute a subgroup of Oceanic (Jackson 1983, 1986). To the southwest lies Palau. Palauan is clearly Malayo-Polynesian, but not Oceanic.² Reviewing the historical record, Ross infers that there was substantial contact with both the Oceanic languages to the east and Palauan to the west:

[W]e know that the people of Yap were in frequent contact with Belau [Palau], whence came material for their stone money, and with the inhabitants of Ulithi, via whom the Yapese communicated with the rest of their "empire" in the atolls of Western Micronesia.
(Ross 1996: 124)

Ross solves the puzzle of Yapese classification by positing at least five lexical strata. A strata inherited from POc is argued to be the oldest because it is found in bound morphemes (the transitivizer *-e:ɣ* <POc **-akini* as well as vowel raising historically motivated by the POc transitivizer **-i*), and in the pronominal system. Later strata come from early Palauan, from another unidentified non-Micronesian source (which Ross suggests might be an even earlier stage of Palauan or perhaps some extinct relative), from early borrowings from Nuclear Micronesian languages, and from later borrowings from Ulithian and Woleaian. Ross further presents evidence to suggest that Yapese and proto-Admiralty may have had a distinct common ancestor (Ross 1996: 143-5).

In recent history, Yapese has been influenced by Spanish, German, Japanese and American English. In addition to Ross' five lexical strata, one can observe borrowings from each of these sources, e.g.: *kuruuth* (<Spanish *cruz*) 'crucifix, Christian cross'; *Moontaag* (<German *Montag*) 'Monday'; *neegii* (<Japanese *negi*) 'onion'; *faloowaa* (<English *flour*)

‘bread, flour’.

Yap is currently a multilingual society. Colonia, its capital, has a sizeable population of outer islanders who speak various Micronesian languages, especially Ulithian, Woleaian, and Satawalese. Because there are no high schools on the outer islands, students who wish to continue with their schooling come to Yap from the outer islands, and English is the lingua franca of not only the high school, but government and commerce.

The maintenance of Yapese culture and language is of contemporary concern on Yap. These themes are articulated by Jesse Raglmar-Sublomar in his address to the 1995 meeting of the Pacific Islands Association of Libraries and Archives (PIALA):

It has been said and I think it has a lot of truth that “we need to know where we come from in order for us to know where we are going”. This is what I think our history, our culture, our customs and traditions teach us. They make us a stronger people, a more committed people and a more respectable people. Our societal values have worked for many generations of our people for thousands of years. These values of self-respect and a sense of community, pride, cooperation and commitment, to name a few, come from our culture, our traditions and our history ... Our cultural heritage provides for us enlightenment and uplifting that in our entire experience can never be provided by anything else we have. Our culture, our heritage must be viewed in terms of its crucial role in our future sustainability as a people.
(Raglmar-Sublomar 1995: 13-14)

The Yap State Education and Enterprising Department (YapSEED) is vigorously committed to ensuring that Yapese culture and language is represented within a western-style education system. YapSEED is currently in the process of reassessing its curriculum, and has recently published a series of early reading texts in all four languages of Yap state, as well as in English. In an interview (conducted as part of the current study) Sherri Manna comments on the differences between current education in Yap and her own schooling in the 1950s:

“Ma tin ba ‘araay ni goomaang ea boechii yaat boed ea chineey ni gu ma guy ea bitiiir ni sikuul ni yi ma fil ea yaat ea da ‘un fil ea tin’eam ngomaed ni marunga’agean yu Wa’ab.”

“Those things, for example the little stories that I see they teach to schoolchildren now, they didn’t teach those to us, those things about Yap.”

2. Previous Linguistic Scholarship

The history of linguistic scholarship on Yapese reflects the colonial history of the islands. The earliest probable western contact is in 1526, when the Portuguese explorer Diego del Rocha landed on what he named the Sequeira Islands – most likely Ulithi (Lévesque 1996). Contact with westerners was sporadic until the later part of the nineteenth century. In 1869, the German trading company J.C. Godeffroy & Sons established an office on Yap. Both Germany and Spain had an eye toward Micronesian territories, and in 1885, Pope Leo XIII ruled that the islands would be ruled by Spain (Labby 1976).

The Spanish missionary and Capuchin monk Fr. Ambrosio de Valencina produced the earliest published work on Yapese grammar (de Valencina 1888), *Primer Ensayo de Gramatica de la lengua de Yap*. His grammar, printed in Manila, is, as far as I can ascertain, the first published work which contained written Yapese. The Spanish-based orthography which he employed was used until the Yapese Orthography Committee reworked Yapese orthographic conventions in 1972 (YRG: 4). The work contains a short dictionary of some forty pages and a list of phrases and dialogues. For modern commentary on de Valencina’s grammar, see Hoyos Hoyos (1996).

In 1899, after their defeat in the Spanish-American war, Spain sold its Micronesian territories to Germany (Alkire 1976). For the first half of the twentieth century, the majority of recorded linguistic scholarship is German. The German Mission Fathers (*der Patres der Mission*) primer from 1909 appears to be directed toward teaching German to Yapese

children. As well as lessons on the alphabet, it contains sections on geography and patriotic songs in German. The Yapese portion of the text includes twelve short texts (without translations) and conjugation tables for German and Yapese verbs.

Sixtus' (1914) grammar is the most comprehensive of the early grammars. He covers basic phonology, major grammatical categories, transitivity, conjunction, affirmation and negation, interjections and morphological derivation in thirteen chapters. He also includes a set of practice exercises for learners, and a substantial dictionary — both German-Yapese and Yapese-German.

Henry Furness' 1910 work, *The Island of Stone Money: Uap of the Carolines*, is an ethnographic work with an appendix which covers language. As well as a short, fourteen-page word list, he deals with various grammatical categories, numerals and conjunctions. His remarks on Yapese are typical of colonial attitudes:

“It is almost needless to remark that when a language has never been set forth in writing, its forms and even its pronunciation are as shifting as the sands of a beach. The only object of those to whom it is native is to understand and be understood. Let these two ends be gained, and all the accidents of grammar are superfluous and pronunciation will fall under no critic's condemnation ... In these circumstances I have deemed it wisest to set forth the Etymology and Syntax in the briefest and most concise way, and trust to phrases and the vocabulary as supplemental to the mother wit of the traveller in his communication with the simple-minded natives of this truly charming island”
(Furness 1910: 181)

During the first decade of the twentieth century, there was a burgeoning Japanese presence in the islands. With the outbreak of World War I, Japan seized control of German Micronesia (Alkire 1976). During this period, Japanese language instruction was widespread, and many older Yapese people are fluent in Japanese. At the end of World War II, the United States of America took over the administration of the islands of Micronesia. The post-war period sees the last of the pre-modern German grammars, Lorrach's (1953) manuscript.

Unfortunately, this manuscript has been available to me only as a microfiche copy. The condition of the manuscript is very poor, and a good deal of it is handwritten, rendering much of it entirely illegible.

The works of Isidore Dyen and Samuel Elbert mark the beginning of American scholarship. Elbert (1946) recorded preliminary Yapese-English and English-Yapese word lists. Dyen (1949), working with an “informant from Dechimur in the Tamil district” produced an *Interim Report* which took a modern approach to phonological description. Although the orthographical representation is somewhat changed, the phonological system that he set out closely resembles that on which the modern orthography is based. Dyen also comments on the presence of regional variation in Yapese.

In 1969, Robert Hsu produced a dissertation entitled *Phonology and Morphophonemics of Yapese*, as well as a short paper on the same subject in *Hawai'i Working Papers* (Hsu 1969a & b, respectively). Hsu was also heavily involved in the computational aspect of producing PALI dictionaries and grammars – a series of works on Pacific languages produced by the University of Hawai'i Press (see Hsu & Peters 1983). Around the same period, Jensen, Iou and Pitmag produced a set of lessons intended for American Peace Corps volunteers learning Yapese (Jensen, Iou & Pitmag 1967).

By far the most comprehensive works on Yapese grammar and lexicography are the PALI grammar and dictionary, produced by John Jensen, Leo Pugram, Raphael Defeg and John Baptist Iou. The *Yapese-English Dictionary* (Jensen et al. 1977a), contains both English definitions for Yapese headwords, and a finderlist for Yapese translations of English words. The *Yapese Reference Grammar* (Jensen et al. 1977b) presents comprehensive and detailed descriptions of phonology, morphology and syntax.

Since Jensen et al.'s grammar, linguistic scholarship on Yapese has mostly taken the form of short articles or unpublished theses and dissertations. John Walsh and Eulalia Harui-Walsh examined connections between Yapese and Ulithian (Walsh & Harui Walsh 1979, Walsh 1985, Walsh 1987). Jensen's short essay on transitivity and passivization (or rather the lack thereof) appeared in 1984. Hung's 1989 essay deals with the phonology of Yapese vowels, and Cho and Ladefoged (1997) examine the articulatory phonetics of ejective consonants. Ballantyne (2000) describes Yapese reduplication and argues for the evidence of both CV and CVC syllables in non-final position. Ballantyne (2004) examines information structure and referring expressions in Yapese in the framework of Centering Theory. This work is recapped in some detail in Chapters 6 and 7.

3. The Corpus

The corpus of materials used as data in the present study were collected over an intermittent period of eighteen months in Hawai'i and on Yap. The corpus is comprised of two parts; the Honolulu corpus and the Colonia corpus. The Honolulu corpus was collected at the University of Hawai'i in the spring of 2001. It consists of four short texts previously published by PALM (Pacific Area Language Materials) (PREL 1999) as readers for upper-level elementary students.³ Three of these are narratives: *L'agruw i Maabgol* (The Married Couple, Anon 1978/1999a), *Beaq ni ba Moqon ngea ba Raan' i Moongkii* (A Man and a Troop of Monkeys, Yiftheg 1978/1999),⁴ retold by Bernard Yiftheg, and *Thilig Kaakaroom* (A Long Ago Storm, Anon 1978/1999b). The final text in the Honolulu corpus, *Guwchiig* (Dolphins, Anon 1999) is a non-fictional piece of expository text concerning the habits of dolphins. The entire Honolulu corpus comprises 3, 077 words of written text. The texts were

translated by Ms. Stella Kolinski, a native speaker of Yapese from Colonia, and interlinearized collaboratively.

The Colonia corpus was collected over a two-month period between September and November of 2002, on Yap. The corpus consists of three texts; *Schooldays*, *M'uw* (Canoes) and *Dapael* (Menstrual Houses). All three texts are interviews, and were transcribed and translated by Ms. Angela Y. Kenrad and Sheri Manna, who were my primary language consultants and teachers.

Ms. Kenrad was in her thirties at the time the interviews were conducted. She is originally from Rumung, but was resident in Keng, Weloy (within the town of Colonia) at the time of the interviews. Sheri Manna is from the Weloy district and in her fifties.

In *Schooldays*, Angela Kenrad interviews Sheri Manna about her childhood and her experiences at Saint Mary's school. This first interview was intended to familiarize both consultants with the process of interviewing, transcription and morpheme-by-morpheme translation.⁵ *M'uw* is an interview conducted with Mr. Walter Chieng by Angela Kenrad in the town of Teb, Tomil, in which he describes some aspects of traditional canoe building. The interviewee for *Dapael* (who has asked that her name not be made public) gives an account of the traditions surrounding puberty rituals for women and the demise of the custom of *dapael*, or menstrual houses. She was interviewed in a town in Weloy. Both of these interviewees are over 65, and were chosen for their expertise in traditional knowledge. Copies of the tapes and transcribed interviews are available on Yap, at the Education Department (YapSEED), in the Historic Preservation Office, and at the Yap State Archives. Copies of the transcripts have been deposited in the Department of Linguistics Reading Room, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and digital copies of the tape are available in the

same department's Phonetics Laboratory.

In total, the corpus is comprised of 6, 665 words (769 clauses). Table 1 summarizes the materials in the corpus.

Table 1: Summary of Corpus Materials

Text	Abbreviation	Words	Clauses
Honolulu Corpus			
<i>L'agruw i Maabgol</i> (The Married Couple)	L	938	114
<i>Beaq ni ba Moqon ngea ba Raan' i Moongkii</i> (A Man and a Troop of Monkeys)	M	779 (614 narr 165 questions)	86 (71 narr 15 questions)
<i>Thilig Kaakaroom</i> (A Long Ago Storm)	T	373	121
<i>Guwchiig</i> (Dolphins)	G	1, 152	18
Total for Honolulu Corpus		3, 242	339
Colonia Corpus			
<i>Schooldays</i> Angela Kenrad interviews Sheri Manna	S	550	75
<i>M'uw</i> (Canoes) Angela Kenrad interviews Mr. Walter Chieng	W	1, 454	187
<i>Dapael</i> (Menstrual Houses) Interview conducted by Sheri Manna	D	1, 409	168
Total for Colonia Corpus		3, 413	430
Total Corpus		6, 655	769

In producing translations and transcriptions of the texts recorded in Colonia, I have tried to be mindful of Leo Pugram's critique of earlier linguistic fieldwork on Yap. Pugram's 1989 paper delivered at the *Vernacular Language Symposium on New and Developing*

Orthographies is a summary of the impact of linguistic scholarship and particularly of orthographic change from the perspective of an educator. Pugrum provides the following suggestion for future linguists working on Yapese:

The three native speakers never worked together. Each worked with the linguist at different times. This was a problem for us later because as each new native speaker came to work with the linguist he said what the earlier native speaker had said before was untrue. I was one of these.
(Pugrum 1989: 47)

Transcriptions were produced by both Angela Kenrad and Sheri Manna in parallel. After an initial transcription was produced, I reviewed the parallel transcriptions in conjunction with the tape, and highlighted areas in which the records were unclear or inconsistent. The process was then revisited at areas of unclarity. The entire transcription was then checked and rechecked against the tape. The tape and transcript were then presented to the interviewee for review. In the case of Mr. Walter Chieng, who is not literate in Roman script, unclear sections of tape were checked verbally.

One of the unforeseen advantages of this methodology was that I was spontaneously able to gather some data on sociolinguistic variation as Ms. Kenrad and Mrs. Manna combed through the tapes and remarked upon regional variation in passing. This data is not substantial and not explicitly analyzed here (although see chapter 4 for brief remarks on the transitive dual agreement marker). Any assessment of the examples of Yapese contained within this dissertation should bear in mind that Yapese is regionally diverse, and that the data presented here are not representative of the pronunciation or the idiom of all speakers of Yapese.

4. Thumbnail Sketch of Yapese Grammar

For a detailed treatment of Yapese grammar, readers are referred to Jensen et al.'s (1977) *Yapese Reference Grammar*. The following is intended as a thumbnail sketch to assist readers who are unfamiliar with Yapese to read the examples in this work. Grammatical analysis which is new or differs substantially from the analysis in Jensen et al. (1977a, b) will be laid out and motivated throughout the rest of this dissertation.

4.1. Phonology and Orthography

Yapese distinguishes voiceless stops and fricatives; voiced stops and fricatives are not distinguished. Plain and glottalized contrasts are found for glides, the lateral liquid, nasals, and a subset of the voiceless obstruents. Table 2 represents Yapese orthography (to the left) and IPA values (to the right) for Yapese consonants.

Table 2: Yapese Consonants. Adapted from YRG: 38.

	labials		dental		retroflex		velar		glottal	
plain voiceless stops	p	p	t	t	ch	ʈʂ	k	k	q	ʔ
glottalized stops	p'	p'	t'	t'			k'	k'		
plain voiceless fricatives	f	f	th	θ	s	s			h	h
glottalized fricatives	f'	f'	th'	θ'						
voiced obstruents	b	β	d	ð	j	j	g	x		
plain nasals	m	m	n	n			ng	ŋ		
glottalized nasals	m'	m'	n'	n'			ng'	ŋ'		
plain liquids			l	l	r	r				
glottalized liquids			l'	l'						
	high front				high back rounded					
plain semivowels	y	j			w	w				
glottalized semivowels	y'	j'			w'	w'				

With respect to vowels, Yapese distinguishes vowel length at eight points of articulation,

giving rise to sixteen distinct vowels. Vowels and approximate IPA values are given in Table 3. Again, Yapese orthography is represented to the left.

Table 3: Yapese Vowels and Approximate IPA Values. Adapted from YRG (14, 18)

Short Vowels				Long Vowels			
	front	central	back		front	central	back
high	i ɪ		u ʊ	high	ii i:		uu u:
mid	e ɛ	ö œ	o ɔ	mid	ee e:	oe œ:	oo ɔ:
low	ë æ	ä a	a ʌ	low	ea æ:	ae a:	aa ɑ:*

*[ɑ] is the approximate IPA value assigned to this vowel by the YED (xi); the vowel is however more fronted than the cardinal IPA value.

The current Yapese orthography was introduced in 1972, by a committee comprised of Yapese representatives from districts across the islands, the Yapese linguists Pugrum and Iou, and University of Hawai‘i linguist John Jensen. Prior to this, the orthographic system designed by Spanish missionaries in the late 1800s was in widespread use. The introduction of the *new spelling*, as it is called, has been a matter of some controversy, with many Yapese people preferring to use the *old spelling*. Particular controversial is the representation of vowels in the new spelling, which is significantly different from that of the older system, and the use of ‘q’ to represent the glottal stop.

I believe that the biggest mortal sin committed in the orthography process was to add the letter ‘Q’ which does not represent any sound, but is used as a glottal stop. Nobody, and I mean nobody, liked that ‘Q’.
(Pugrum 1989: 48)

Pugrum (1989) also remarks that another problem created by the introduction of the new spelling was that it was taught only to children, and that adults were unable to assist their

children with schoolwork.

New spelling is preferred by YapSEED; and because many of the materials in my corpus were either taken from YapSEED publications (or publications of its earlier incarnation, Yap District Department of Education), or else were intended to be of use to curriculum developers at YapSEED, I have used new spelling throughout. In transcribing spoken data, we have made every effort to be faithful to conventions established by the Education Department. In written Yapese, orthographic conventions vary to some extent; for the analyst of connected discourse, this is particularly noticeable when writers vary the assignment of word boundaries. Out of a conviction that this variation is a valid site of analysis, I present all data from written sources in its original form.

4.2. Selected Aspects of Clause Structure and Morphosyntax

The major open word classes in Yapese are nouns, verbs and adverbs. There is no adjectival class. Noun attributes are expressed by means of relative clauses.

1. ba yakoq ni ba geel
 ref storm relpro stat strong
 “a strong storm” (lit. “a storm which is strong”)

Yapese has a nominative/accusative case system, with case distinctions only apparent on pronouns. The order of basic constituents in a Yapese clause varies according to the tense-mood-aspect of the verb and the form of noun phrase arguments. For clauses with full noun phrase arguments, canonical Yapese word order is VSO. Verbs are preceded by a TMA marker:

2. Kea chuwqiy Tamag ea falowaa.
 perf.3.sg buy.tns Tamag idf bread
 “Tamag bought bread”
 (YRG 263, interlinear glosses mine throughout)

If the subject is a pronoun, it occurs preverbally. Two clause structure patterns are found in Yapese; what Jensen et al. (YRG) call *independent pronoun verb phrases* and *suffixed pronoun verb phrases*.

In an independent pronoun verb phrase, the independent subject pronoun (Table 4) precedes the tense aspect marker, which in turn precedes the verb.

3. **Yaed** bea marweel.
 3.pl prog work.intr
 ‘‘They are working.’’
 (YRG 194)

In the singular, the independent pronouns divide into two series (Table 4). Series I is used in contrastive environments, and is often found when the pronoun is not in a clause (*I gaag?* ‘Me?’). Series II is used when the pronoun is nominative or accusative and in a non-contrastive environment. Object pronouns occur post-verbally (unless they are fronted, see below).

In suffixed pronoun verb phrases, the subject pronoun follows, and is often cliticized to, the TMA marker. Clitic subject pronouns (Table 5) neutralize the distinction between dual and plural.

4. **Kea** yaen nga Donguch.
 perf.3.sg go to Donguch
 ‘‘S/he has gone to Donguch.’’
 (YRG: 204)

The term *suffixed pronoun verb phrase* comes from the fact that clitic pronouns are accompanied by subject number agreement suffixes. These suffixes preserve the dual/plural distinction lost in the clitics. Agreement follows a three-way system. Clitic subjects of transitive verbs follow a different agreement pattern from subjects of intransitive verbs (Table 6).

5. Ka ra chuwaeyeed ea chugum.
 perf 3.non.sg buy.tns.pl idf things
 “They bought things.”
6. Ka ra chuwaey’ gaed.
 perf 3.non.sg buy.intr pl
 “They bought.”
 (YRG: 137)

Yapese verbs are either transitive or intransitive; there are no verbs like English *eat* which may be transitive or intransitive depending on context. Valency may be signaled morphologically via the intransitivizing prefix *ma-* or the transitivizing suffixes *-eeg*, *-g*, or *-y* (YRG, Jensen 1984) or *-naag*, which under certain circumstances has a causative semantics.

Intransitive	Transitive	Gloss
<i>masay</i>	<i>sey</i>	to split
<i>fool</i>	<i>fooleeg</i>	to measure
<i>miith</i>	<i>mithaeg</i>	to hide
<i>quruf</i>	<i>qurfeeg</i>	to burn
<i>puruuy’</i>	<i>puruuy’ naag</i>	to discuss
<i>roowroow</i>	<i>roowroow naag</i>	to be red/to make red

Pronominal objects of transitive verbs may either be independent pronouns (as in Table 4)⁶ or object clitics (Table 7):

7. Kea guyeeg.
 perf.3.sg.nom see.tns.1.inc.acc
 “S/he saw me.”
8. Kea gyeem.
 perf.3.sg.nom see.tns.2.acc
 “S/he saw you.”
 (YRG: 140)

For the interaction between subject and object suffixes on transitive verbs, see chapter 4.

Table 4: Independent Pronouns

	<i>sg I</i>	<i>sg II</i>	<i>du</i>	<i>pl</i>
<i>1 inc</i>	gaeg/gaag	gu	gadow	gadaed
<i>1 ex</i>			gamow	gamaed
<i>2</i>	guur	ga	gimeew	gimeed
<i>3</i>	qiir	∅	yow	yaed
<i>indef</i>	yi		gayow	gayaed

Table 7: Clitic Objects

	<i>sg</i>	<i>du</i>	<i>pl</i>
<i>1 inc</i>	-eeg	-dow	-daed
<i>1 ex</i>		-mow	-maed
<i>2</i>	-eem	-meew	-meed
<i>3</i>	∅	-row	-raed

Table 5: Clitic Subjects (YRG: 199)

	<i>sg</i>	<i>pl</i>
<i>1 inc</i>	gu	da
<i>1 ex</i>		ga
<i>2</i>	mu	mu
<i>3</i>	i/∅	ra
<i>indef</i>	ni	

Table 8: Dative Pronouns (YRG: 149)

	<i>sg</i>	<i>du</i>	<i>pl</i>
<i>1 inc</i>	ngoog	ngoodow	ngoodaed
<i>1 ex</i>		ngoomow	ngoomaed
<i>2</i>	ngoom	ngoomeew	ngoomeed
<i>3</i>	ngaak'	ngoorow	ngooraed
<i>indef</i>	ngooyiy		
<i>impers</i>	ngaay		

Table 6: Subject Number Agreement

	<i>Transitive Verb</i>	<i>Intransitive Verb</i>
<i>dual</i>	-eew	gow
<i>plural</i>	-eed	gaed

Table 9: Genitive Pronouns for Alienable Possession (YRG: 149)

	<i>sg</i>	<i>du</i>	<i>pl</i>
<i>1 inc</i>	roog	roodow	roodaed
<i>1 ex</i>		roomow	roomaed
<i>2</i>	room	roomeew	roomeed
<i>3</i>	rook'	roorow	rooraed
<i>indef</i>	rooyiy		
<i>imper</i>	riy		

Dative pronouns (Table 8) are diachronically derived from the object clitics and the preposition *nga* (YRG: 149), with vowel lengthening and raising in the affixed preposition. The third person singular *ngaak'* differs from this paradigm in that the vowel is not raised, and the element [k'] is not present in the object clitic pattern (third person singular object clitic is zero).

As is the case in many Austronesian languages, marking of the possessive relationship is split between those items which are inalienably possessed, in which case the possessor is indicated by a suffix on the possessee, and those items which are alienably possessed, and are marked by a genitive pronoun (Table 9). The inalienable possessive suffixes are identical in form to the object clitics, with the exception that they have no vowel at the onset of the suffix in the singular (that is, the suffixes in the singular are –g first person inclusive singular, –m second person singular). The alienable genitive pronouns follow a similar pattern to the dative, (with similar exceptions to the paradigm evidence by the accusative clitics), but with the element *roo-* rather than *ngoo-*.⁷ For ready reference to these data, readers are referred to Appendix B.

A typologically interesting feature of Yapese grammar is that Yapese has no voice alternations. Although Yapese has noun incorporation constructions (e.g. *chuwaen'* 'to get tired of, be disinterested in, be bored with' < *chuw* (intr) 'to leave, go out from, divorce, remove out of, get out of' + *waen'* 'feeling, mind, opinion (3.sg) (YED)'), they are of the type that Mithun (1984) has dubbed *lexical compounding*, and are not productive (Ballantyne 2003).

Passive functions, such as the suppression of a non-topical agent (Givón 1981, 1994)

are achieved in Yapese by means of the semantically bleached indefinite pronoun.

- | | | | | | | |
|----|----------|-----------|----------|--------|---------|------------|
| 9. | Ka | ni | pirqeg | bayaay | nii | |
| | perf | idfpro | find | again | cmp | |
| | qayuweeg | ea | guwchiig | ea | girdiiq | ko |
| | help | idf | dolphin | idf | people | to fitaeq. |

fish

“It was also found (lit “someone also found”) that dolphins help people to fish.”
(Brugger & Lukubyad 1978)

Evidence that *ni* is in fact a pronoun (rather than a marker of passivization) comes from the fact that it has a clitic form (*ni*) and an independent form (*yi*). The aspect marker *maa* ‘habitual’ may not occur with clitic pronoun markers (see Chapter 4 for more detailed discussion of tense-aspect-mood and pronouns), and in the next example, takes the independent form of the indefinite pronoun. Note also the position of *yi* prior to the TMA marker, as is the case generally for independent pronouns.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----------|---------|---------|------|-----|---------|
| 10. | yi | maa | sikeeng | naag | ea | girdiiq |
| | idfpro | hbt | test | tns | idf | people |
| | ngea | chiyeg | | | | |
| | and | monkeys | | | | |
- “people and monkeys are tested” (lit. “someone tests people and monkeys”)

Yapese also has the option of fronting noun phrases:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|--------|----------|-----------|------|
| 11. | Pi | n'ean | ney | ea | goqo |
| | Pl | things | spkr.prx | FM | only |
| | maa | riin' | ea | guwchiig. | |
| | hbt | do.tns | idf | dolphins | |
- “These things, only dolphins do (them).”
(Brugger & Lukubyad 1978)

5. Concluding Remarks

This chapter has been intended as a ready reference for those readers unfamiliar with Yapese or the properties of Oceanic or Austronesian languages. I have briefly discussed the

history and current status of the Yapese language, and reviewed previous linguistic scholarship on this language. After outlining the data on which the present project is based, I sketch some relevant aspects of Yapese phonology, orthography and grammar.

The position of Yapese as a primary subgroup of Oceanic means that new data of any kind which furthers our understanding of this language which is so unlike its neighbors makes a valuable contribution to Austronesian linguistics. Given that studies of discourse structure in general have focused for the most part on widely spoken, and particularly Indo-European languages, analysis of Yapese discourse structure additionally contributes to our understanding of the typological diversity of the world's languages. Finally, the rather unusual lack of case manipulation morphology in Yapese makes the analysis of the functions of referring expressions an intriguing addition to the study of information structure and accessibility.

Notes

¹ 5,132 speakers of Yapese were recorded by the 2000 FSM census (FSM Division of Statistics 2002).

² Although the exact heritage of Palauan is unclear, Zobel (2002) proposes that it shares innovations with a group that he dubs “nuclear Malayo-Polynesian”, which includes all of the Malayo-Polynesian languages except some languages of the Philippines, northern Sulawesi, and north-east and interior Borneo.

³ These texts are included with the kind permission of PALM, Pacific Area Learning Materials.

⁴ There are in fact no monkeys on Yap.

⁵ In order that accommodation for a non-fluent learner not influence the language of the interviews, I was present as an observer but apart from some preliminaries and thank-yous, I do not speak on the tapes.

⁶ In my sample, only objects which are coreferential with the subject are found in the independent form. My sample is however too small to extrapolate this as a general rule.

⁷ Jensen et al. (1977b) analyze *roo-* as a preposition meaning ‘of, from’, but this analysis is untenable, since the form does not occur independently. They offer the example:

- (i) Kea feek rook’
 perf take.tns
 “He took it from him”

I submit that this is literally glossed as “He_i took his_j one”, and that there is no reason to suspect that *rook*’ is an ablative rather than a genitive in this example.