

Un-Austronesian features of **Malol** an Oceanic language of PNG

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1. Malol in PNG

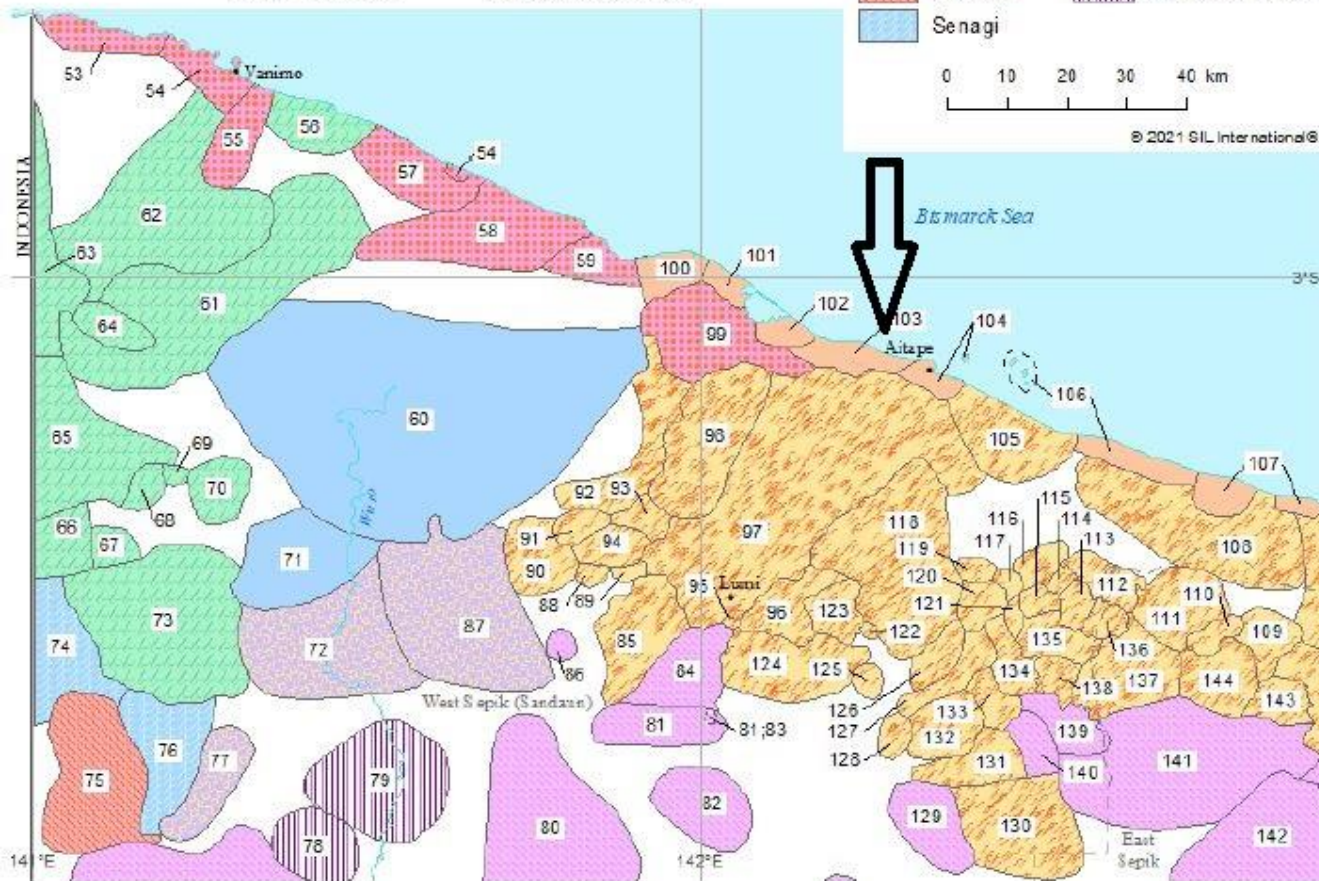
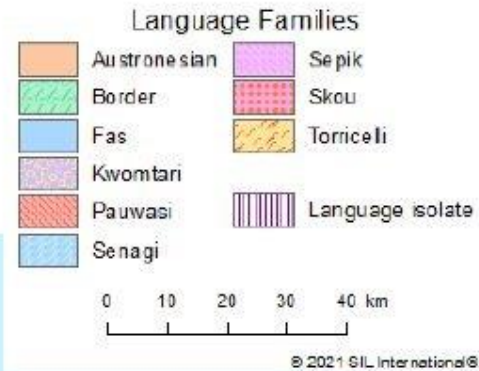
- **Location:** North coast of New Guinea, between the towns of Vanimo and Wewak, near Aitape.
- **Speakers:** 4,600. (Ethnologue 24th ed, 2021)
- **Classification:** Oceanic / Western Oceanic / North New Guinea / Schouten / Siau.
- Until around 2005 Malol was considered a **dialect** of Sissano, one of the 7 Siau languages in the Schouten linkage.
- **Other Schouten languages:** Manam, Kairiru, Tumleo, Arop, Sissano.
- **Torricelli** languages to the south: Walman, Olo.
Skou languages to the west: Barupu.
(These are unrelated Papuan families.)
- **Data:** fieldwork; van den Berg-Klingeman (in preparation).

Malol in PNG

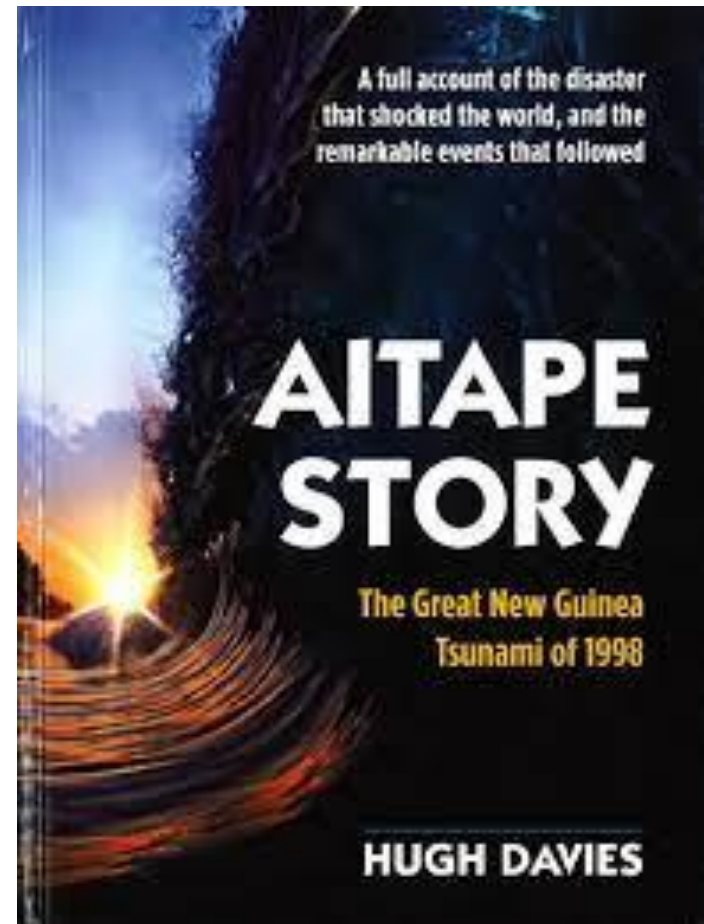
**PAPUA NEW GUINEA
MAP 3**

Notes:
 1. White areas are sparsely populated or uninhabited.
 2. Parentheses show the number of times a language's number appears on map, if more than once.

--- Province boundary - - - - Language area overlap



Area hit by the 1998 tsunami



'Regular' Oceanic features of Malol

In some ways, Malol is a typical Oceanic language:

- 5 vowels, 14 consonants.
- 3 demonstratives.
- SVO constituent order.
- Verbs are inflected for number/person.
- Verbs make a realis-irrealis distinction.
- Serial verb constructions are common.
- Few conjunctions; no clear subordination.
- No evidence for metatypy.

Various **un-Austronesian** features

- Four falling diphthongs.
- No voiced stops.
- Word-final palatal consonants.
- No clusivity distinction among the pronouns.
- Fusional verb morphology.
- No valency-changing morphology.
- A simple binary numeral system.
- Several postpositions.
- Three posture verbs used in existential clauses.
- Use of bare oblique NPs without an adposition.
- A light verb *-ho* 'do'.

2. Focus on **six atypical features**

1. Four falling diphthongs.
2. Word-final palatal consonants.
3. No clusivity distinction among the pronouns.
4. No valency-changing morphology.
5. A simple binary numeral system.
6. A light verb *-ho* 'do'.

The six features

Each feature is first described and illustrated.

- Was the feature present in **Proto-Oceanic**? Hence, is it a **loss** or an **innovation**?
- Is it present in other **Schouten lgs**? Proto-Schouten?
- Is it possibly influence from **Torricelli** languages, specifically Walman (M. Dryer, p.c.) or Olo (Staley 2007)?
- is it possibly influence from **Skou** languages, specifically Barupu (Corris 2014)?
- Tentative conclusion.

Feature 1. Four diphthongs

	front	back
high to mid	iě	uǔ
mid to central	ɛě	ɔě

Written as <ie, ea, uo, oa>

<wies>

‘paddle’

<teteap>

‘false’

<puol>

‘pig’

<toa>

‘sugarcane’

Phonetic realisations of <ie>: [iě], [iě̃], [iǔ], [i^ə] or [i^ɪ].

Feature 1. **Four diphthongs**

- Diphthongs in Proto-Oceanic? No.
- Not common in Oceanic; some found in Vanuatu (Mwerlap).
- Diphthongs in Schouten languages? Yes.
Tumleo, Sissano, Arop (but poorly described).
- Diphthongs in Torricelli? Walman: yes, [iə] and [uə].
Olo: no.
- Diphthongs in Barupu (Skou)? No.
- Tentative conclusion: **local innovation** under the influence of Torricelli.

Feature 2. Palatal consonants

Two palatal consonants: /tʃ/ and /ɲ/, mostly in word-final position.

/rutʃ/	<ruj>	'3 dual'
/atʃ/	<aj>	'word, speech'
/atʃakal/	<ajakal>	'machete'
/raɲ/	<raiyn>	'water'
/tuɲ/	<tuiyn>	'cook'
/pɔɲ/	<poiyn>	'night'

Feature 2. Palatal consonants

- Did Proto-Oceanic have palatals? Yes, but not in word-final position.
- Several Schouten languages have retained POc *ñ as /ɲ/, including Kairiru and Tumleo; but /n/ and /ɲ/ merged in Proto-Siau (and hence in Malol).
- POc *ñ always became *n* in Malol:
 - *ñamuk ‘mosquito’ > *nam*
 - *moñak ‘fat; sweet, tasty’ > *mon* ‘good’

Feature 2. Palatal consonants

- How then did the new final palatals arise in Malol? Through metathesis, palatalization, loss of /i/.
Through metathesis, palatalization, loss of /i/.

boni* ‘night’ > *pɔŋi* > *pɔni* > *pɔin* > *pɔij* > *pɔŋ***

taŋis* ‘cry’ > *taŋi* > *tani* > *tain* > *taŋ***

ranum* ‘water’ > *ranu* > *rani* > *rain* > *raŋ***

tunu* ‘cook’ > *tunu* > *tuni* > *tuin* > *tuŋ***

- Palatal nasals in Torricelli languages?
Walman: yes, in all positions. Olo: no.
- Palatal nasals in Barupu (Skou): no.
- Tentative conclusion: **local innovation** under the influence of Torricelli.

Feature 3. No clusivity

Malol lacks a clusivity distinction among 1st person non-singular pronouns.

	SG	DU	PL
1	<i>yia</i>	<i>oj</i>	<i>et</i>
2	<i>e</i>		<i>om</i>
3	<i>i</i>	<i>ruj</i>	<i>re</i>

Proto-Oceanic: clusivity present for 1PL (Ross 1988).

Proto-Schouten: clusivity present, but ‘fading’ in Kairiru dialects (van den Berg 2015).

Proto-Siau: lost (inclusive member retained).

Feature 3. **No clusivity**

Torricelli: clusivity is mostly lacking.

Skou: clusivity is completely lacking, including Barupu.

Conclusion: **contact-induced loss.**

Feature 4.

No valency-changing morphology

Malol has

no causative, no applicative, no reciprocal,
no transitivizer and no passive morphemes

Verbal morphology limited to realis-irrealis-
imperfective, 1PL, 3PL, and adverbial suffixes:

- (1) *kos i k-ow i ka-wa-'a ono iyn*
and 3SG REAL-carry 3SG REAL-go-up house 3SG.POSS

‘and she took him up to her house’ (A1-01)

- (2) *i tak-tataiy re ta-r-'aiyn-mana otuol.*
3SG IMPF-accompany 3PL IMPF-3PL-eat-TOG food

‘he habitually gets together with them and they eat food together’

Feature 4.

No valency-changing morphology

But **Proto-Oceanic** had extensive valency-changing morphology:

- causative **pa-*, applicative **-aki(ni)*
- reciprocal **paRi-*, transitivizing **-i*, passive **ni-*.

Proto-Schouten had:

causative **va-*, reciprocal **vai-* (Ross 1991) and probably also applicative (present in Manam).

Torricelli: Walman (and other Palei languages) have applicative and reflexive-reciprocal morphology.

Skou: Barupu has applicative morphology.

Feature 4.

No valency-changing morphology

Conclusion:

- **causative** morphology **lost** due to **influence** from Torricelli
- loss of **applicative**: local innovation (?)

Feature 5. Simple numeral system

Malol has an extremely simple binary numeral system, distinguishing only 'one' and 'two':

Number	Malol	
1	<i>pontenen</i>	one
2	<i>eltin</i>	two
3	<i>eltin pontenen</i>	two one
4	<i>eltin eltin</i>	two two
5	<i>eltin eltin pontenen</i>	two two one
6	<i>eltin eltin ka eltin</i>	two two and two

In practice, only '1' and '2' are found; for '3' and higher numbers Tok Pisin or English words are used.

Feature 5. **Simple numeral system**

Proto-Oceanic: a full decimal system

Proto-Schouten: 1,2,3,4,5 and 10 (Ross 1991)

Torricelli (Walman, Olo):

1, 2, 1+2, 2+2, one hand/side

Barupu (Skou):

1, 2, 1+2, 2+2, one hand/side

Conclusion: **loss** under the **influence** of Torricelli and Skou.

Feature 6. Light verb *-ho* ‘do’

The verb *-ho* has at least four functions in Malol:

- a. Main verb ‘do, make’.
- b. First verb in a SVC with causative meaning.
- c. With following adjectives: ‘be, become’.

(3) *Ha-m e'i awo-ho prum*
name-2SG.POSS 2SG.POSS IRR-do big

‘May you be famous’ (lit. your name will be/become big)

(4) *Elinka ko-ho mon peyien Tompuiy ka-wama ke-tera i.*
but REAL-do good really turtle REAL-come REAL-find 3SG

‘But it was a good thing that Turtle came and found him.’ (A1-03)

Feature 6. **Light verb -ho 'do'**

d. A **light verb** with borrowed nouns (from Tok Pisin) forming verb-adjunct phrases.

(5) *i awo-ho sawe na re oa tartar.*
3SG IRR-do knowledge OBL PL thing many
'she will have knowledge of many things' (Gen 3:6)

(6) *i ko-ho pilim pan otuol tak-'al etek i*
3SG REAL-do feeling COMP food IMPF-bite very 3SG
'he felt very hungry' (he did feeling that food was biting him) (B1-02)

Feature 6. **Light verb -ho 'do'**

Light verbs in Proto-Oceanic? Not reported.

Light verbs are reported for various families in the Sepik area. (Foley 2018:361)

Torricelli? Not reported.

Barupu (Skou)? Yes. (Corris 2004:186)

Conclusion: **a contact-induced innovation.**

3. Summary: most changes appear to be contact-induced

Feature of Malol	Does it correspond to POC? Loss or innovation?	Does it correspond to Torricelli (esp. Walman)?	Does it correspond to Skou (esp. Barupu)?
1. Four diphthongs	no; innovation	yes	no
2. Word-final palatal consonants	no; innovation	yes	no
3. No clusivity	no; loss	yes	yes
4. No valency-changing morphology	no; loss	partly	partly
5. Simple numerals	no; loss	yes	yes
6. Light verb 'do'	no; innovation	no	yes

3. Conclusion: **further questions**

1. How does this relate to the '**cline of innovativeness**' in Ross (1991)?

Moving from east to west in the Schouten languages there is an increase in innovations (mostly losses and mergers). Manam in the far east is the most conservative. Malol, close to the western edge, is very innovative.

2. What **other un-Austronesian features** of Malol are candidates for contact-induced change?

3. Conclusion: further questions

3. What was the **sociolinguistic situation** of Proto-Siau?

Substrate? Admixture?

How much multilingualism?

Why no other new features (e.g. gender)?

Were there other Skou languages in that area before the Austronesians arrived?

Cf. Donohue and Crowther (2005).

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