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Austronesian Languages in Papua A Description of its Phonological and Grammatical Aspects

By Yohana Susana Yembise
University of Cenderawasih Jayapura PapuaIndonesia, Indonesia

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Austronesian Languages in Papua. A Description of its Phonological and Grammatical Aspects

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I. Introduction

The Austronesian language family constitutes the largest language family and the second most widespread after the Indo-Europen in the world (Gleason, 1955). The Austronesian family extends from Madagascar in the West to Easter Island in the East. This family is divided into two, i.e., Western Austronesian (Indonesia) and Eastern Austronesian (Oceanic). The Eastern Austronesian is divided into three: Micronesian, Polynesian, and Melanesian (Grace 1979: 62, Gleason, 1955: 410, Capell, 1969: 18, Sirk 1978: 255). Those belonging to Western Austronesian are Malay (extended throughout coastal Sumatera, Malay, Kalimantan, and elsewhere), Javanese, Sundanese, Batak, Balinese, Dayak, Makasar, Tagalog, Bisawan, Ilocano, (the last three in the Philippines), Chamorro (in Guam) and Malagasi and Bushi in Madagascar. The Polynesian languages cover the area from Hawaii to New Zealand including Hawaiian, Tahitian, Samoan, and Maori. The Micronesian covers Mariana Islands, Guam, Gilbert Island, Nauru, and the Islands nearby. The Melanesian covers New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Tuvalu, and the Bismarck Archipelago (Gleason, 1955: 410, Sirk, 1978: 255).

Author : The University of Cenderawasih Jayapura PapuaIndonesia.
E-mail : wardodori@hotmail.com

Hesperonesian is another name for Western Austronesian given by Dyen (1978: 237). Dyen divides Western Austronesian into the Philippine and the South Sunda based on the characteristics of verb morphology. The Philippine consists of the Philippines, Taiwan, the Sangir Talaud, and Northern part of Sulawesi and Kalimantan. The South Sunda consists of Sumatera (except Acehnese), Islands West Sumatera, Malay Peninsula, Java, Madura, Bali, Lombok, greater part of Sulawesi, and some languages in Kalimantan such as Kendayan (Sirk, 1978: 258). Besides, Dyen (1978: 235) also divides Austronesian in Indonesia into Western Indonesia and Eastern Indonesia. The Eastern Indonesia covers the areas from Sumbawa in the South, Celebes in the North, and Western Shore of Geelvink Bay in the East. Another division is based on Brandes line. It says that the Western boundary of Eastern Indonesia is from West Roti in the South goes up to East of Sulawesi between Banggai Island and Sula Island, goes up to Sangir Island, and to Talaud Island in the North. This division is based on 'the proposed genitive'. It means that in the Eastern Indonesia languages, the noun phrase with genitive modifier consists of the possessor followed by the modifier with the head.

Compared with the Papuan languages, AN in New Guinea (the whole Papua Island) are much lower than the former in number of speakers, number of languages, and the areas where they are spoken. The New Guinea Island or Papua lies to the East of all the great islands of the Malay Archipelago and forms a blockade between them and the Pacific Ocean; its Southern part of the island stretches out towards the continent of Australia separated by the Arafura Sea and Torres Strait, which at its narrowest point is the great group of the Solomon Islands on the South of the Equator, while the Northern is the cape of Arfack Peninsula (Yembise, 2011). New Guinea has more or less one thousand languages consisting of approximately 750 Papua New Guinean and 250 languages in Papua, so about one-fifth of the world's languages are spoken on the Island of New Guinea (Ajamiseba, et al., 2001). It is also a fact that in this one province of Papua, these languages are spoken over one third of all the languages in Indonesia which are Papuan and Non Papuan languages.

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There is a linkage between Papuan languages and Non-Papuan (Wurm, 1982 cited in Purba, 1994). Greenberg, for example, states that there is a sign of interrelated symbols between Papuan languages with Tasmanian languages; however it is lacking evidence. On the contrary, Wurm argues that the link is closely related to Andaman rather than to Tasmanian languages. It is due to the similar lexical and structural aspects and typological grounds between Andaman and Papuan phylum languages. Laycock (Purba, 1994), on the other hand, points out the interrelationships between Burmic language (South-East Asia) and Sko Stock language (Jayapura) since they both have tonal features, complex verb morphology, heterorganic consonants. From the illustrations, it is assumed that Papuan languages might have originated from Andaman and Burma.

Moreover, Purba (1994), in his article on the description of Papuan languages, claims that there has been a lack of adequate knowledge on the status of New Guinea's languages. Humbolt quoted by Purba (1994) discovered in 1839, that the Polynesian language is in some forms related to Indonesian language. Sydney (in Purba, 1994) discovered the existence of Non-Austronesian which was the original of New Guinea languages. Sydney maintains further that Austronesians first travelled from the West, continued their adventure over the North of New Guinea to Salomon. The AN speakers occupy only coastal areas except in few areas. This condition can be interpreted that the AN speakers are immigrant rather than indigenous (Capell, 1978: 6). Foley believes that the speakers of AN came to New Guinea five thousand years ago. Purba (1994) clarifies the movement of the people in terms of migration.

> First migration was the moving from vicinity of Rooke Umboi Island near the west tip of New Britain. Second migration was from the Philippines via north coast of New Ireland to eastern Melanesia. According to Pawley and Green quoted by Foley (1986) the Austronesian people arrived in New Guinea five thousand years ago and now there are around 200 Austronesian languages spoken in this area (Purba, 1994:19)

The Papuan languages are divided into two major classifications: Non Austronesian and Austronesian (Purba, 1994: 21). It is estimated that those who speak Non Austronesian exceed those of Austronesian in number (Purba, 1994). Non Austronesian falls into Trans New Guinea phylum, Sko phylum, Kwontari phylum, East Bird's Head phylum, Geevink Bay phylum. Austronesian comprises Geelvink Bay West (Biak Numfor), Geelvink Bay Island (Yapen Waropen, Geelvink Bay East (languages of Sarmi coast district), and Northen coast East (Ormu and Tobati).

II. The Characteristics of Austronesian Languages

Purba (1994) states the Capel's Survey of New Guinea Languages indicates the characteristics of Austronesian (AN) languages as : (1) Compared with those of NAN languages, phonemic patterns of AN languages are not complicated; (2) Most have a five-vowel system, except some languages in Papua New Guinea, which have even vowels; (3) Generally, they have few or no clusters, except in Numfor-Biak and neighbouring areas in Geelvink Bay; (4) Voiceless fricative consonant is usually labiodentals /f/, but the voiced fricative is bilabial /v/; (5) Prenasalisation in some areas is normal; (6) Stress is usually predictable; (7) They have a simple consonantal system; (8) Glottal stops and velar nasals are rare, and velar fricative /g/ is common in a large number of Islands Melanesians languages; (9) Noun phrases with an adjective modifier are constructed by placing the modifier after the head. Noun phrases with a numeral are also constructed likewise. Numeration is usually quinary, based on five; (10) Verbal phrase is fairly simple. Verbal is usually preceded by a subject marker (person and number), even if the sentence has noun subject. It can also have an object and/or a tense marker; (11) Passive form is rare; (12) Some have tenses, but they are not emphasised; (13) Word order is SVO and they have prepositions instead of postpositions; (14) All are event dominated, the interest is on what happened, when and how it happened, rather than in people or object involved or the place of the occurrence; (15) Degree of complexity of morphological structure of the verbs ranges from west to east. The farther east along the north coast, the more complex they are. This apply not only to the north coast but also to the Island groups and the mainland; (16) Some of those characteristics only appear in the Austronesian type which has SVO and preposition, but do not exist in the Austronesian type which has SOV and preposition.

Capell (1969: 126) divides the Austronesian languages in New Guinea based on syntactical word order into Austronesian-1 (AN1 and Austronesian -2 (AN2), respectively: a) those with SOV word order and with the use of postposition; and b) those with SVO word order and with the use of preposition. Then he subdivided the AN1 (including those in PNG) into nine groups and the AN2 into ten groups. Out of the nine groups of the AN1, only one group belongs to Papua, namely, Tobati-Ormu at Humbold Bay, and out of the ten of the AN2, only three belong to Papua, namely, Bomberai Peninsula, Geelvink Bay, and North Eastern Irian Jaya. So according to this division in Papua, there are only 4 areas: 1) Humbold; 2) North Eastern; 3) Geelvink Bay; and 4) Bomberai Peninsula. The first belongs to AN1 (with SOV and postpositions) and the rest (three groups/areas) belong to AN2 (with SVO and

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prepositions). Unfortunately, the Austronesian languages on the Islands of West of Papua (Raja Ampat Islands) such as Kawe, Legenyem, Ambe, Maya, Matbat, etc. which still belong to Irian Jaya, are not included in the division. To complete the division given by Capell, the group of Raja Ampat must be added. It means that the Austronesian languages in Papua cover: 1) Raja Ampat; 2) Bomberai; 3) Geelvink Bay; 4) North Eastern; and 5) Humbold Bay. But later in 1971, Capell (1978: 65) changed the names the other way around, AN1 became those with SOV and prepositions and AN2 became those with SOV and postpositions because the fact that those with SOV and postposition consist of only few languages around the minority groups (Capell, 1978).

In addition, Capell further divides the AN1 (those with SVO and prepositions) in Papua into: a) Geelvink Bay and Vogelkep; and b) Bomberai Peninsula (Capell, 1978: 269). And the AN2 (those with SOV and postpositions) are divided into: a) Humbold Bay; and b) Sarmi coast. Besides the change of the name from AN1 to AN2 to AN1, he also changed the Sarmi coast languages into: AN2 (with SOV and postpositions). Due to his inconsistence of grouping the Sarmi coast languages, the writer tried to collect data of one of the languages there and analyze them to find out the structure of the languages. Based on the analysis on Sobei, one of the languages in Sarmi has SVO and prepositions. It means it belongs to AN1 (see the map below).

In Papua, there are two hundred and fifty living languages covering Austronesian (AN) and Non-Austronesian or Papuan. The number of the Austronesian languages is only 54, about 20 per cent, while the rest are Papuan. The only language which has a lot of speakers is Biak, it has around 40000 speakers. The speakers of this language occupy Biak Island, Numfor Island, and Northern part of Bird's Head. There are nine languages which have speakers between 1000 and 10000 (Ambai/9000, Waropen/6000, Wandamen-/5000, Ansus/4600, Irarutu/4000, Sobey/1850, Salawat-/1600, Serui Laut/1200, and Ron/1100). All of these languages, except Salawati, are in the Geelvink Bay (Teluk Cenderawasih). And the rest, 44 languages, have only between 50 and 200 speakers (Silzer et al, 1991). Those belonging to the last group are in danger of extinction.

This description of Austronesian languages in Papua was based on the analysis of the sample. The sample covers Kowiai (Walker, 1991), Irarutu (Matsumura, 1991), and Wandamen (Saggers, 1991) in the West, Biak (Fautngil et.al, 1991) and Waropen (Hening et.al., 1991) in the middle, and Sobei (Purba, 2005), Ormu (Purba et.al., 1996), Kayupulau (Purba et.al, 1990), and Tobati (Purba, 1999) in the East. Only eight languages can be used as the sample because all the rest have not been written. The primary sources of data are the research reports of those languages, and the secondary are books about Austronesian such as *A Survey of New Guinea Languages* (Capell, 1969), and some articles about Austronesian languages in *Pasific Linguistic.*

Geographically all AN can be classified into four groups: a) Island West of Mainland of Papua (Raja Ampat); b) Bomberai Peninsula; c) Island in Geelvink Bay (Teluk Cenderawasih or Sarera Bay); and 5) Northeastern Papua (Sarmi and Humbold). Papuan and Austronesian interfere each other mostly on structure level. Austronesian languages are characterized by the SVO word order and the use of prepositions, but many AN have undergone a fundamental shift in their typological characterization so that they come to resemble the typical Papuan languages, with SOV and postpositions, such as Motu in PNG, and Ormu, Tobati, and Kayupulau in Papua. And some Papuan languages also have undergone some changes in structure by having SVO word order and prepositions, such as Papuan languages in Bird's Head. Mantion, a Papuan language, has changed its word order from SOV to SVO by the influence of Wandamen. And some Papuan languages in North Halmahera suh as Maisin also have been Austronized. Below is the description of the phonological and grammatical aspects of Austronesians which have already been analyzed, followed by a brief description of the cultural background of the native speakers of AN.

III. Phonology

In terms of vowel systems, Capell (1969:26) says that AN languages in New Guinea fall into two groups -- those having a five vowel system (i, u, e, o, a) and those having a seven-vowel system (i, u, e, o, E, O, a) and each of these covers non-overlapping geographical areas. Further he says the velar nasal (ŋ) rarely occurs. About the consonants he says that the AN have p, t, k,?, b, d, g, m, n, ŋ, f, s, l, r, and y, and these languages in general admit few on clusters. Based on the research reports of the languages, the two groups of vowel system are 5 vowels (i, u, e, o, a) and 6 vowels (i, u, e, ə, o, a), but none of them has 7 vowels as mentioned by Capell above. The AN1 have a five-vowel system (missing of ə̲) and the AN2 have a six-vowel system. Most of the AN1 have only 12 to 14 consonants (p, k, b, d, j, f, b, s, m, n, r, w, y) and AN2 have at least 20 consonants (p, t, k, b, d, g, c, j, p, s, š, x, b, m, n, ñ, ŋ, r, w, y). Some of AN1 and AN2 have bilabial fricatives (b and p) instead of labiodental fricatives (f and v) besides bilabial stops (b and p). In Kayupulau the velar fricative (g) also appears. The velar nasal (ñ) according to Capell rarely occurs, but based on the reports all AN2 have the phoneme and Kowiai (AN1) also has the phoneme. Although Waropen and Kowiai have simple syllabic patterns, respectively three (V, CV, CVC) and

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four (V, CV, VC, CVC), Biak, Tobati, Kayupulau, and Ormu have complex syllabic patterns. The syllabic patterns of Biak are V, VK, KV, KVK, KKV, KKVK, KKKV, KVKK, KKKVK, and KKVKK. The patterns show that some of them have a complex consonants cluster which refutes the Capell's statement above. Information above shows also that AN2 have richer phonemes than the AN1. One of Sobey words characteristics is that the words have a lot of glottalized vowels (?) such as in/ma?a/ 'wide', /es?er/ 'rotten', /et?a/ 'full', /monisar?e 'dream', /ema?e?ot/ 'to count'.

IV. Syntax

This section describes only about: 1) sentence word order; 2) position of wh-question words; and 3) negation in AN in Papua.

Examples:

In Kowiai (Walker, 1991)
7) *Yei na-sua.* 'Yei like bread.'
Yei 3ps-like bread
S V O

In Wandamen (Hening et. Al., 1991)
8*) I-vaoru sasu* 'I buy a shirt.'
1 ps-buy shirt
S V O

Examples with SOV:

In Kayupulau (Purba, et. al., 1990)
9) Nye hova cnia. 'He eats sago.'
He sago eat
S O V

In Ormu (AN) (Purba, et al., 1996)
10) *Nsa mhara rarai*. 'The cook taro.'
they taro cook
S O V

11) Nsa norana fekwa na mhara rarai. 'They cooked taro in the forest yesterday.'
they yesterday forest in taro cook
S AT AP O V

a) Sentence Word Order

Austronesian-1 (AN1) which are the majority of the Austronesian have the SVO word order, while the Austronesian-2 (AN2) which consist of three languages have the SOV one. Examples 7 and 8 show the SVO word order and examples 9 and 10 show the SOV one. In examples 8 and pronominal subject does not appear, but the prefix i- on the verb makes the person of subject is clear. Example 11 (Tobati) shows that adverb (adjunct) of time and place are always placed before the verb for AN2, not at the end (see the map).

b) Position of Wh-Question Words

Wh-questions such as 'who', 'what', 'when', and 'where' in Indonesian and English are placed at the beginning of the sentence, but in AN2 they are placed before the verb or after the subject. Examples in Ormu, Tobati, Wandamen, Irarutu, and Biak are presented below (Example 12 and 13). Example 14 the word *khacarena* 'where' is placed before the verb 'hold'. It happens also to example 15 (*usahre* 'what').

In Ormu (Purba, et, al, 1996)
12) *Nsa maroro khacarena jai* ?
they party where hold
'Where do they hold the party?'

In Tobati (Purba, et, al., 1999)
13) *Nti usahre fos*?
he what say
'What did he say?'

Unlike in AN2, Wh-question in AN1 are placed at the end of the sentence. In example 14 the word *vito* 'what' is placed at the end. The same thing happens on examples 15 (*roso* 'where').

Examples:

In Wandamen (Saggers, 1991)
14) *N-unu vitoi*?
2ps-cook what
'What are you cooking?'

In Biak (Fautngil et, al., 1991)
15) *W-un mkan ine roso.*
2sp-take axe this where
'Where did you get this axe?'

c) Negation

The negator 'not' in both AN1 and AN2 is placed at the end of the sentence. Examples in Irarutu and Tobati, are presentend below. In example 16 the word *ti* 'not', in example 17 '*fani'* not', are placed at the end of the sentences to make them negative.

In Irarutu (Matsumura, 1991)
16) *Yahiaro dungin ti.*

In Tobati (Purba, et, al., 1990)
17) *Anyi nhut kh-jai-rok fani.*

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Yahia-ro du- n- gin ti Mother me 3ps-call-1 ps not
John-foc prog-3ps-sleep not 'Mother did not call me.'
'John is not sleeping.'

V. Phrases

This section describes the structure of: 1) a noun phrases with a numeral modifier; 2) a noun phrase with a possessive modifier; and 3) prepositional phrase and postpositional phrase.

a) Noun Phrase with a Numeral Modifier

The numeral modifier in a noun phrase both in AN1 and AN2 comes after the head. The modifier *meniam* 'five' comes after the head *wah* 'canoe' (18), the modifier *ririm* 'five' comes after the head 'ai 'tree' (19).

AN In Tobati (Purba, 1999)
18) *wah meniam* 'five canoes'
Canoe five

AN In Biak (Fautngil, 1991)
19) *ai ririm* 'five trees'
tree five

b) Noun Phrase with a Possessive Modifier

A possessive modifier in a noun phrase comes before the head; it is the same as that in English. Examples 20 show that possessive modifier *neh* 'my' comes before the head *wah* 'canoe'. The same thing happens in example 21.

In Tobati (Purba, 1999)
20) *neh wah* 'my canoe'
My canoe

In Sobey (Purba, 2005)
21) *ebe dimo* 'their house'
their house

c) Prepositional and Postpositional Phrase

It has been mentioned before that the main differences between AN1 and AN2 are the sentence word order (SVO and SOV) and the use of preposition for AN1 and postposition for AN2. Example 22 and 23 show prepositional phrases (the relater is place before the axis) and example 24 and 25 show the postpositional phrases (the relater is placed after the axis).

Examples of preposition for AN1;

22) In Biak (Fautgil et.al.1991)
ro rum 'at home'
at home

23) In Iraruntu (Matsumura, 1991)
nene wita 'in the forest'
in forest

Example of postposition for AN2

24) In Tobati (Purba, 1999)
r*um hrica* 'beside the house'
house beside

25) In Ormu (Purba et.al, 1996)
fekwa na 'in the forest'
forest in

26) *Na-sabera don na-na Amana.* 'He sells the fish in Kaimana.'
3ps sell fish 3ps-in Kaimana

27) *U-roa i u-na Amana.* 'I met him in Kaimana.'
1ps-met him 1ps-in kaimana

In Kowiai not only the verb form is influenced by person of subject but the form of the preposition as well. Example 26: the preposition *na* becomes *nana* because the subject is the first person singular (*na*) and in example 27: the prepositional *na* becomes *una* because the subject is the first person singular (*u*).

Thus, the above description of the phonological and grammatical aspects of the AN is one of the uniqueness languages of the people in New Guinea island who belong to Austronesian culture which is described briefly below.

VI. The Cultural Aspects of Austronesians

The speakers of Austronesian have their own typical history and cultures which are still in connection with the history of the linguistic designation and division discussed earlier. Briefly, Austronesian, a following group after the first inhabitant in New Guinea Island called 'Papuans', is said to be originated from China, continued migrating to Taiwan about 5000 to 6000 years ago, and then, extended their journeys to the South (Muller, 2008). Muller thanked the proof of the out rigger canoe and the sail. The groups made their journey in small numbers. A small group travelled and arrived in the Northern part of Phillippines, then, formed two directions to the South; a group travelled to the southwest (Borneo), Malaysia, Sumatra and Java (ancestors of Malay and Western Indonesia today). The other group went through the South-East, through Halmahera to the Northern coast of New Guinea (the island of Bismarck Archipelago), the Salomon Island, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, and Fiji, finally they made further trip to the East, arrived and posted there as the

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people of Polynesia. The evidence can be seen through their advanced water craft, navigation, and sailing techniques (Muller, 2008).

From the above description, the Austronesian, by its name, is not related to Australia especially to the Aborigin of this continent. As Muller states, "the term 'Austronesian', a language designation' can create a confusion as it is close to 'Australia' but has nothing to do with the Aborigin of Australia" (Muller, 2008:48). Thus, the story of the journey of the Austronesian more likely to be the proof of the Austronesian in Papua today , who are dwelling along the coastal areas and some tiny islands on the Northern parts of the Island (see the map). The Austronesians in Papua used to live in sort of high leg-houses made of wood. These people share similar life styles, traditions, for example; daily job, wedding, government, religion, music and arts which are illustrated below.

Firstly, majority of Austronesian in Papua are fisherman, gardener or farmer. They usually operate canoe which is decorated by Melanesian based traditional sign or symbol like other ethnic Austronesian for fishing, travelling or going for battle. They way they catch fish is by using fishing nets and diving. For traditional wedding, bride price is very important to the man if he wants to marry a woman. A man should pay for a woman's parents using a traditional transaction through bride price such as antique Chinese plate, money and housing facilities. In relation to traditional government, the users of Austronesian are strictly bound to the traditional kingdom system in which the king is posted around the head of the bird of this island "islands of Raja Ampat". The traditional system of the head of tribes are popular in the Eastern parts, such as Biak, Serui, Sarmi, and Yotefa (Jayapura), the people here are using the traditional terms of "Ondoafi" (head of tribe) or "Mambri" (head of war). With regard to the music and art, Austronesian has traditional dances and dancers, they usually paint their bodies often with a decoration of colorful fresh flowers. Their popular traditional craft in relation to ritual ceremony, for example, in Biak called "Karwar" (statue). Nowadays, the people of Biak are not worshiping that anymore, just like other Austronesians in other places, they are Christian followers. Finally, the traditional music and song are very much Melanesian based culture using traditional drums "tifa" and guitar "ukulele.

VII. Conclusion

Languages in Papua consist of Non-Austronesian group and Austronesian group, the Austronesian languages are devided into AN1 and AN2 with the main characteristic respectively SVO word order and preposition (AN1) and SOV word order and postposition (AN2). The AN2 phonemes are richer than AN1 ones and consonant clusters of both AN are rather complex. All AN in Papua have complex affixes on verb to show the person of subject and object. Tobati is a unique Austronesian because it has complex cases. AN pronouns are also complex since they have dual and trial besides exclusive and inclusive. Most of AN numeral systems have base 5. The wh-question words in AN1 are placed after the subject or before the verb and those for AN2 are placed at the end of the sentences. The numeral modifier and the possessive modifier in a noun phrase in both AN comes after the head. Interestingly, Austronesians in Papua, based on the history of their trip to New Guinea 5000 years ago, share Melanesian cultures similar to others countries in Pacific such as Fiji, Vanuatu, New Caledonia. Based on local linguists, a special recommendation with funds from central and local government must be given to language researchers since ninety per cent of the Austronesian languages and cultures have not been analyzed and written yet especially those in Raja Ampat and those around Sarmi. In fact, eighty per cent of the languages have only 50 to 100 speakers and simply old people still exercise the languages; therefore they are threatened to be extinct. Further urgent investigations or analyses are in need of expansion; otherwise, the speakers from whom the data are collected will not be available anymore since the old people will disappear within less than ten-year times.

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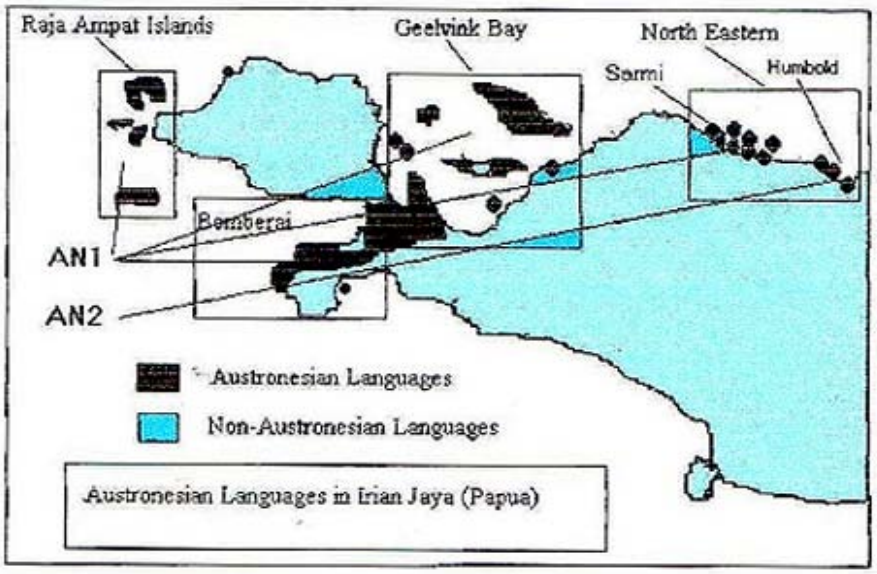
Map of Papua



Abbreviations

AN1 = Austronesian-1	2p = the second person
AN2 = Austronesian-2	2pp = the second person plural
S = Subject	2ps = the second person singular
O = Object	3p = the third person
V = Verb	3pp = the third person plural
AP = Adjunct of Place	foc = focus
AT = Adjunct of Time	prog = progressive
1p = the first person	exc = exclusive
1ps = the first person singular	inc = inclusive

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