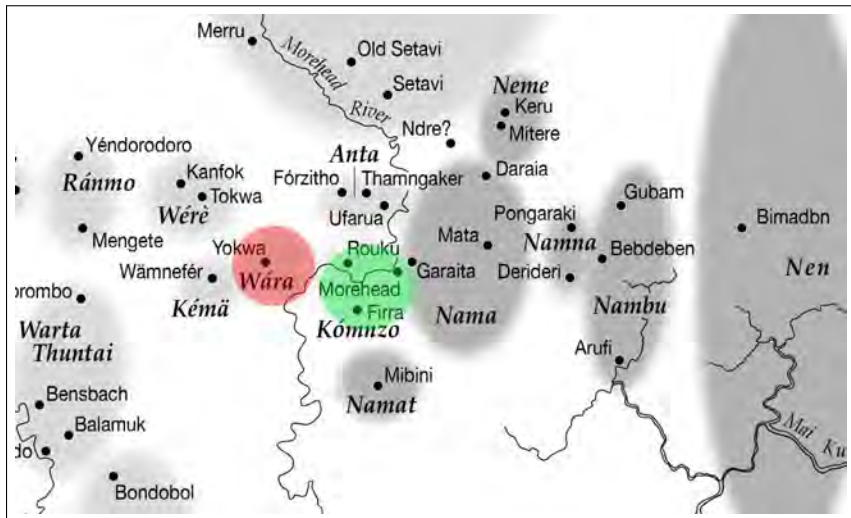# MULTILINGUALISM IN SOUTHERN NEW GUINEA.
THE CASE OF KÓMNZO AND WÄRA

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MOREHEAD–MARO LANGUAGES OR YAM LANGUAGES

OUTLINE

1. anthropology
   1. exogamy
   2. linguistic ideology

2. history
   1. changes in the traditional settlement patterns
   2. linguistic consequences
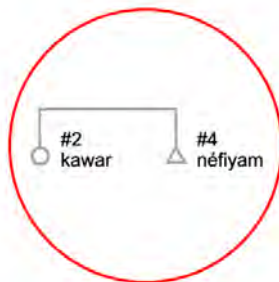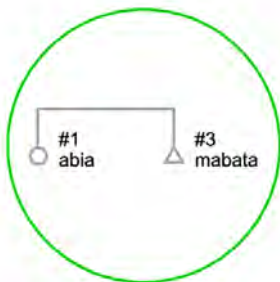
3. linguistics
   1. kómnzo and wära
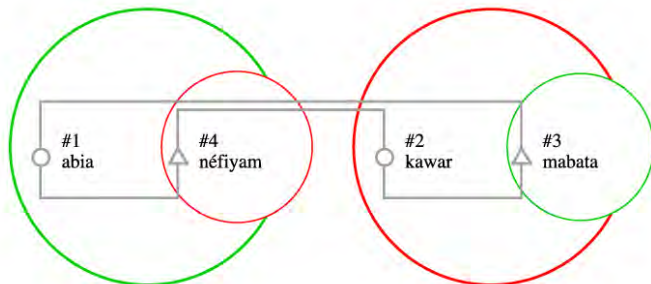   2. affix borrowing
   3. verb prefixes

4. conclusion

EXOGAMY

▶ sister exchange between "starting places" (villages)

EXOGAMY

- sister exchange between "starting places" (villages)
- virilocal residence

EXOGAMY

- in any given village, marriages are composed of a man from the village and a woman from a different village
- "short marriage cycles" (Ayres 1983)[1] lead to strong connections between particular pairs of villages

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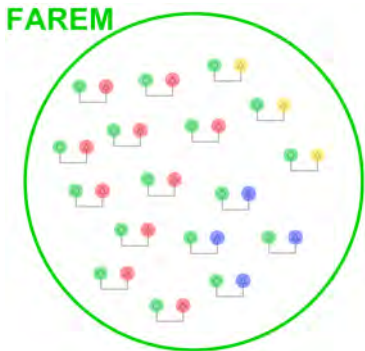
[1] Ayres, Mary Clifton. 1983. *This side, that side: Locality and exogamous group definition in the Morehead Area, Southwestern Papua.* Doctoral Dissertation: University of Chicago.

LINGUISTIC IDEOLOGY

"Place exogamy is an ideal and normative rule. Marriage between people who claim prior unity at a 'starting place', i.e. the dialect group, is prohibited. In the native model this rule is sometimes explained as a rule of dialect exogamy: "*We should not intermarry because we talk the same language*" is a phrase sometimes stated by informants."
(Ayres 1983: 186)

the notion of 'starting place' overlaps with language variety

place exogamy = linguistic exogamy

LINGUISTIC IDEOLOGY

"In some parts of Australia, land areas are held to be associated with particular languages or subjectively-defined linguistic varieties by specific mythological sanction." (Merlan 1981: 146)[2]

► indirect link between an individual and a particular language variety

individual ↔ clan (or other social group) ↔ land ↔ language

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[2] Merlan, Francesca. 1981. Land, Language and Social Identity in Aboriginal Australia, *Mankind*, 13:2, p.133-148

LINGUISTIC IDEOLOGY

- ▶ sociolinguistic questionaire
- ▶ 40 individuals (21male/19female)
- ▶ language identity aligns with father's language (just like clan or 'starting-place')
- ▶ actual variety spoken on a daily basis or linguistic competence is irrelevant

Tukém Forak (about 70)

L_1 = Wära[a]
grew up in Yokwa (Wära)
married to Rouku (Kómnzo)
father grew up in Kwaikér (Kánchá)
L_{ID} = Kánchá[b]

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[a] L_1 = dominant language
[b] L_{ID} = language of identification

LINGUISTIC IDEOLOGY

- this is the underlying basis of many cultural practices or metaphors:
  - at *story places* only the local variety must be spoken
  - women "receive help" in acquiring the local variety by magic rituals
  - tree metaphor
- or it is stated openly in public speech:
  - women are expected to shift to the local variety
  - (male) children are suposed to learn only the local variety

LINGUISTIC REALITY

- many varieties are heard in Rouku
  - one of the two teachers at the local elementary school is a speaker of Anta
  - one of the local pastors was brought up as a speaker of Nama and he delivers public prayers in Nama
- women do talk (and probably always have been talking) to their children in their own variety

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- each speaker has a multi-language profile
  - e.g.: Kómnzo, Wära, Anta, Nama, Kánchá, English, Motu, Tok Pisin
- but a single language identity

HISTORY

- changes in traditional settlement patterns have been documented: Ayres (1983)[3] & Hitchcock (2006)[4]
- the colonial powers (Great Britain, Australia) and the church (London Missionary Society) encouraged people to consolidate into a village
  - <u>traditional:</u> hamlets (often just one patriline)
  - <u>modern:</u> village ($+$ garden, fishing, and hunting places)

  - <u>motives for consolidation:</u> church, education, access to road network
  - <u>motives for dispersal:</u> traditional way of life, higher density of people, land disputes, lack of resources

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several waves of consolidation and dispersal since the 50's

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[3] Ayres, Mary Clifton. 1983. *This side, that side: Locality and exogamous group definition in the Morehead Area, Southwestern Papua.* Doctoral Dissertation: University of Chicago.

[4] Hitchcock, Garrick. 2004. *Wildlife is our gold: Political ecology of the Torassi River borderland, Southwest Papua New Guinea.* Doctoral Dissertation: University of Queensland.

HISTORY - ROUKU

- ▶ in the past, some Farem men have lived in or "consolidated with" the neighbouring Wära speaking village Yokwa
  - ▶ their children and grand-children speak Wära as their L_1
  - ▶ but they live in Rouku and they are ethnically Farem people
- ▶ contradiction between linguistic reality and linguistic ideology
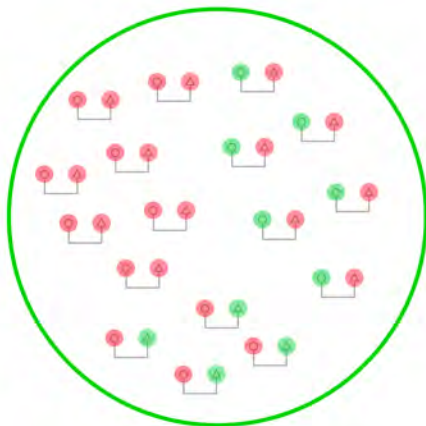
▶ For a group of speakers[5] there is a disconnect between dominant language (L_1) and language of identity (L_{ID})

FAREM $= L_1 = L_{ID}$ (KÓMNZO)

| L_1 (WÄRA) $\neq$ L_{ID} (KÓMNZO) | L_1 (KÓMNZO) $=$ L_{ID} (KÓMNZO) |

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[5]leaving aside women who almost always marry in from another linguistic variety

LINGUISTICS - COMPARISON

- lexical comparison (cognate rate) based on a 350 item word list

	KÓMNZO
ANTA	90%
WÄRA	86%
KÁNCHÁ	70%
NAMA	29%

- but small differences are **highly emblematic**

ENGLISH	WÄRA	KÓMNZO
'bird of paradise'	*yétham*	*yéthama*
'sister'	*yémóth*	*emóth*

LINGUISTICS - COMPARISON

- ► comparison of morphemes / function words

	GLOSS	WÄRA	KÓMNZO
PRONOUN	1SG.ABS	*ze*	*nzä*
	1SG.ERG	*zén*	*nze*
	2SG.ABS	*fe*	*mbä*
	2SG.ERG	*fén*	*mbe*
DEM	PROX 'here'	*nä*	*zä*
	PROX.ALL 'hither'	*nak*	*zmbo*
NOM	ERG	*-o*	*-f*
	ALL	*-f*	*-fo*
	NMLZ	*-se*	*-si*
VERB	M.γ middle prefix	*re-*	*zä-*
	2|3NSG actor suffix	*-éy*	*-éth*

LINGUISTICS

- Kómnzo has copied the IMMEDIATE PAST prefix from Wära
- Kómnzo *n-* is currently being replaced by Wära *nz-*
- the variants of the prefix pattern according to age (in the group on the right)

FAREM = L_1 = L_{ID} (KÓMNZO)

L_1 (WÄRA) $\neq$ L_{ID} (KÓMNZO)	L_1 (KÓMNZO) $=$ L_{ID} (KÓMNZO)
IMM.PST = *nz-*	IMM.PST = *n-* (old) IMM.PST = *nz-* (young)

LINGUISTICS

speaker 1 (male/75/L$_1$=KÓMNZO)

(1) *keke ane ngazime ersérwére ... ane mane né́ngafsinzér ... kofä*

keke ane ngazi-me e-rsr-wr-e   (.) ane mane
not DEM coconut-INS 2|3NSG-scrape-ND-1NSG (.) DEM which
n-nga-fsi-nzr-∅   (.) kofä
IMM.PST-M-count-ND-2|3SG (.) fish

'We don't mix those ones with coconut ... the ones which he has
just listed ... the (types of) fish'

(tci20120922-26 MAB #8-9)

LINGUISTICS

speaker 2 (male/38/L$_1$=KÓMNZO)

(2) *kar mane nzénganéfsine rénzam kar mbenrä?*

kar   mane   nz-nga-n-fsi-n-e   rnzam   kar
place which IMM.PST-M-TOW-count-DU-1NSG   how.many   place
mb-e-n-rä
MED-2|3NSG-TOW-COP.ND

'As for the places that we have just listed, how many did we come up to?'

(tci20120922-21 DAK #40)

LINGUISTICS

- Why this particular morpheme?

- the IMMEDIATE PAST morpheme gets added to a verb which is inflected for NON-PAST

IMM.PST-	inflected verb (N.PST)	$\rightarrow$ immediate past
∅-	inflected verb (N.PST)	$\rightarrow$ present tense / future

- there is another slot in the verb template for DEIXIS which preceeds the IMMEDIATE PAST

DEIXIS-	IMM.PST-	verb

LINGUISTICS

▶ verbs may be marked for deictic status (PROX, MED, DIST)

DEIXIS	IMM.PST	
PROX-	IMM.PST-	verb
MED-	∅-	verb
DIST-		verb
∅-		verb

▶ for the argument only the PROX is relevant

DEIXIS	IMM.PST	
PROX-	IMM.PST-	verb

DEIXIS	IMM.PST	verb	frequency
∅	∅	verb	→ high
PROX-	∅	verb	→ medium
∅	IMM.PST-	verb	→ low
PROX-	IMM.PST-	verb	→ unattested

⟶ in terms of frequency (not structurally) we could say that the deictic prefix and the IMM.PST prefix occur in the same slot

IMM.PST-	verb
DEIXIS-	

▶ speakers can potentially confuse the two slots if there are syncretisms in the system

LINGUISTICS

- deictic prefixes are related to the deictic demonstratives
- Wära: *nä* ('here'), *nan* ('this')
- Kómnzo: *zä* ('here'), *zane* ('this')

	PROX	IMM.PST	
WÄRA	*n-*		verb
KÓMNZO	*z-*		verb

LINGUISTICS

- ▶ past system:

	PROX	IMM.PST	
WÄRA	*n-*	*nz-*	verb
KÓMNZO	*z-*	*n-*	verb

- ▶ present system (variation patterning according to age):

WÄRA	*n-*	*nz-*	verb
KÓMNZO	*z-*	*n-* → *nz-*	verb

- ▶ future:

WÄRA	*n-*	*nz-*	verb
KÓMNZO	*z-*	*nz-*	verb

- ▶ affix copying from Wära into Kómnzo is a 'repair strategy' to disambiguate the syncretism which occurs in a situation of increased or different kind of contact.

CONCLUSION

- ▶ this case study of affix copying from Wära to Kómnzo requires evidence from anthropology & linguistics
- ▶ shows how the social setting interacts with language structure

- ▶ anthropological story:
  - ▶ stable language ecology: high multilingualism due to linguistic exogamy
  - ▶ change in settlement patterns → disturbance in the language ecology → increase in contact between varieties as well as a change in the nature of contact (because some local men (not just married women) speak Wära)

- ▶ linguistic story:
  - ▶ closely related varieties (typologically identical)
  - ▶ syncretism between morphemes of different grammatical categories <u>and</u> different slots in the verb template
  - ▶ morphological material is more easily transferred because it is "below the radar" of lexical purism