

Toward extrication of Trans New Guinea multilingual complexity: An informed comparative analysis of the Southeast Papuan languages

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Linguistic Society of Papua New Guinea Conference, University of Goroka

18 September 2025

1. Introduction

Comparative research on the linguistic relationship of Trans New Guinea (TNG),¹ Southeast (SE) Papuan languages was conducted 50+ years ago (Dutton 1969a, 1969b, 1970, 1971, 1973, 1975a, 1975b, 1975c).² As a plethora of research in many of these languages has taken place since that time,³ an attempt to update knowledge of the seven SE families is imperative. Living SE languages range in estimated population from 50+⁴ up to nearly 26,500,⁵ and are spoken from Morobe Province (two) in the north into Milne Bay Province (six) to the southeast. The majority are spoken in Central (18) and Oro Provinces (12). (Note: Several languages straddle two provinces; in those cases the language group is classified according to the province of the majority of the population.)

A comprehensive examination of Dutton's research provides the foundation. Recent TNG and SE languages historical/comparative research further build on this foundation, providing an informed representation of the SE Papuan group. This develops understanding of SE Papuan's position in the broader TNG relational structure, considering both distinctives and typological similarities, as well as assessing the validity of SE Papuan familial classifications. Increased comparative understanding of SE Papuan also promotes continuing research in various branches of TNG. This preliminary literature review and assessment will provide a catalyst to further ongoing long-term SE Papuan comparative and historical research.

¹ Abbreviations used throughout the paper include: **A** = transitive subject; **EGIDS** = Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale; **ISO** = International Organisation for Standardisation; **O** = Object; **PNG** = Papua New Guinea; **S** = intransitive subject; **SE** = Southeast; **TAM** = Tense-Aspect-Mood; **TNG** = Trans New Guinea; **V** = Verb.

² Excepting later research on the Koiarian family (Dutton 2003, 1996, 2010a, 2010b), which will be investigated as part of the more recent research (cf. §2.3.1). Thomas E. Dutton passed away in 2021 (cf. [Pawley 2001](#) and Pawley 2022 for more details on his scholarship).

³ In 32 of 36 living languages (i.e. 89%). Two of the total of 38 languages are extinct, one is considered moribund and four are threatened (Eberhard et al. 2025); cf. Table 1 below.

⁴ Turaka, a moribund Dagan language (Eberhard et al. 2025).

⁵ Fuyug, a vigorous Goilalan language (Eberhard et al. 2025).

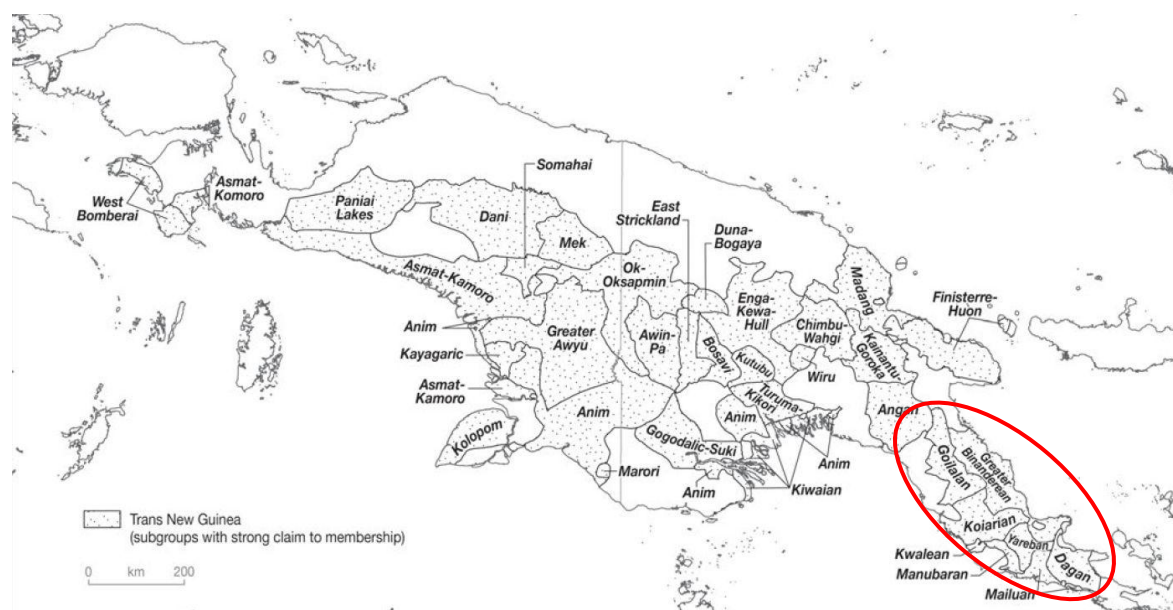
2. Trans New Guinea

The putative⁶ TNG phylum (or ‘family’), the largest Papuan ‘family’ by far, is currently considered to be comprised of approximately 482 languages, grouped in 39 families (or ‘subgroups’, Eberhard et al. 2025). Over time differing hypotheses on the composition of TNG have been proposed and debated. Now already 20 years ago, Pawley (2005:67–107) elaborated on four hypotheses, identifying them as TNG I (1970; Pawley and Hammarström 2018:24), TNG II (1975; Pawley and Hammarström 2018:24–25), TNG III (1975; Pawley and Hammarström 2018:25–27) and TNG IV (1990s; Pawley and Hammarström 2018:27–29). Since the second iteration, the SE Papuan subgroup has continued to be considered part of TNG, first as part of an Eastern group (cf. Ross 2005:23 and Wurm, Voorhoeve and McElhanon 1975:312–314) which included the Binanderean family (at Stock level, so not on par with the others). Thus, comparison of the Binanderean family with the other members of Southeast Papuan is presently beyond the scope of this investigation.

Some more recent studies (Hammarström and Nordhoff 2012, Wichmann 2012, Wichmann et al. 2012, Palmer 2018 and Pawley and Hammarström 2018) have not revealed any significant further findings which would add doubt to SE Papuan’s membership in TNG. In fact, they discuss those subgroups, purportedly with strong evidence of TNG membership; all the SE Papuan families are included (cf. Palmer 2018:16 and Pawley and Hammarström 2018). [Note: Pawley and Hammarström’s (2018) specific findings on each family (or ‘subgroup’) will be highlighted in future research.]

From the map below one can see that TNG extends nearly all the way across the whole of the island of New Guinea, from just below the Bird’s Head Peninsula almost to the southeast tip (or ‘tail’ where the SE Papuan languages are located, as indicated in the red oval).

⁶ “Membership of Trans New Guinea is an area of particular uncertainty.” (Palmer 2018:15)

Map 1: *Trans New Guinea phylum* (from Pawley and Hammarstrom 2018:32, Map 2.1)

2.1 Southeast Papuan families

Table 1 lists the languages of each of the seven families. Each family and language is ordered iconically according to geographic location, beginning with those in Morobe Province in the north continuing on to those in Milne Bay in the southeast.⁷ (Compare Map 2 below to see their precise location.) Note from the EGIDS⁸ ratings that the viability of most of the languages is good; the majority of those that are extinct or in danger (i.e. moribund or threatened) are very small and/or in proximity to the national capital, Port Moresby.

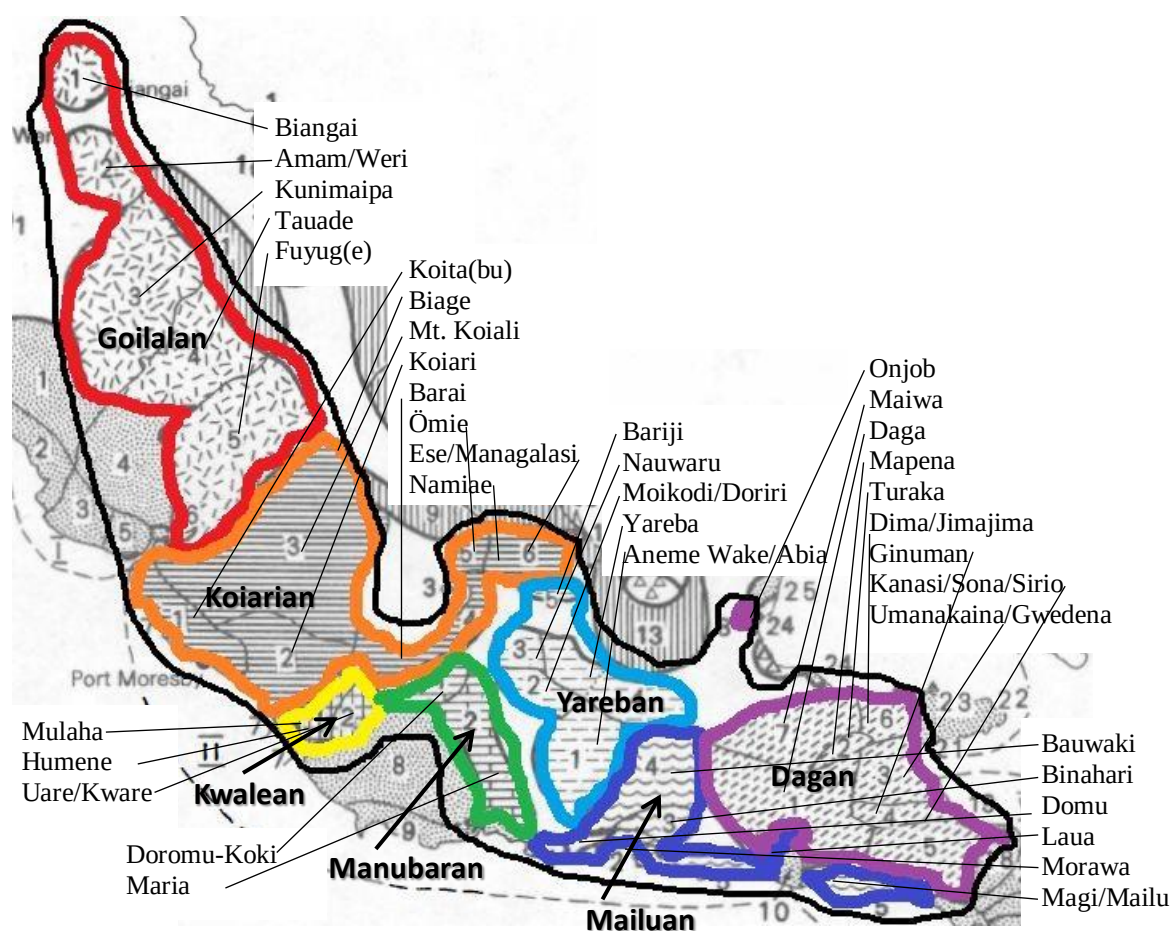
⁷ Data are from Eberhard et al. 2025; population estimates are calculated using figures from [Worldometers](#). Some common alternate language names are also provided (cf. Eberhard et al. 2025 for others).

⁸ [Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale](#) (cf. Lewis and Simon 2010).

Table 1: Southeast Papuan language families

Family	Subfamily	Language	ISO code	Population estimate	EGIDS
Goilalan	Kunimaipa	Biangai	[big]	6,831	5 Developing
		Amam/Weri	[wer]	8,668	5 Developing
		Kunimaipa	[kup]	17,651	5 Developing
		Tauade	[ttd]	15,845	6a Vigorous
	Fuyug	Fuyug(e)	[fuy]	26,435	6a Vigorous
Koiarian	Koiaric	Biage	[bdf]	2,368	6a Vigorous
		Mt. Koiali	[kpx]	6,242	5 Developing
		Koita(bu)	[kqi]	5,871	6b Threatened
		Koiari	[kpk]	8,415	6b Threatened
	Baraic	Ömie	[aom]	2,562	5 Developing
		Ese/Managalasi	[mcq]	21,526	5 Developing
		Barai	[bbb]	4,723	5 Developing
		Namiaie	[nvm]	2,266	5 Developing
Kwalean		Mulaha	[mfw]	0	10 Extinct
		Humene	[huf]	2,023	6a Vigorous
		Uare/Kware	[ksj]	3,343	5 Developing
Manubaran		Doromu-Koki	[kqc]	2,396	4 Educational
		Maria	[mds]	2,906	6a Vigorous
Yareban		Bariji	[bjc]	990	6a Vigorous
		Yareba	[yrb]	2,648	5 Developing
		Nawaru/Sirio	[nwr]	571	6b Threatened
		Moikodi/Doriri	[mkp]	1,959	6a Vigorous
		Aneme Wake/Abia	[aby]	1,953	5 Developing
Mailuan		Domu	[dof]	2,045	6a Vigorous
		Laua/Labu/Lauwa	[luf]	0	10 Extinct
		Magi/Mailu	[mgu]	18,297	5 Developing
		Morawa	[mze]	2,153	6a Vigorous
		Bauwaki/Bawaki	[bwk]	1,119	6a Vigorous
		Binahari(-Neme)	[bxz]	1,356	5 Developing
Dagan		Maiwa	[mti]	2,877	5 Developing
		Daga	[dgz]	14,458	5 Developing
		Dima/(Bayu)	[jma]	1,716	6a Vigorous
		Jimajim(a)			
		Mapena	[mnm]	969	6a Vigorous
		Turaka	[trh]	54	8a Moribund
		Umanakaina/Gwedena	[gdn]	6,049	5 Developing
		Onjob	[onj]	323	6b Threatened
		Ginuman/Dime	[gnm]	3,100	6a Vigorous
		Kanasi/Sona/Sirio	[soq]	5,295	5 Developing

Map 2: Southeast Papuan (from Dutton 1975c:617, Map 1)



2.2 Dutton’s early research

Dutton’s early research will be discussed in chronological fashion.

2.2.1 The Koiarian languages of Central Province: A historical and descriptive linguistic study (1969a)

This is Dutton’s Australian National University PhD dissertation. As his first research into the Koiarian languages it provides the Koiarian family component of his subsequent research. It is divided into two sections: 1) A linguistic literature review of the ‘Central Papua’ languages, i.e. the Koiarian languages and 2) a grammatical sketch of the Koiari language. Dutton (1969a:116) cites Dutton (1968), however only Dutton (1966) is indicated in the references (Dutton 1969a:170) as unpublished ‘field notes’. Perhaps they refer to the same materials; in either case, they are presently inaccessible. In the first section Dutton (1969a:25) discusses the division of the Koiarian family into the two subgroups, Koiaric and Baraic. Other details include findings that are incorporated into Dutton’s subsequent studies; they will be discussed below. The second section, a brief sketch of the Koiari language, is based on a transformational grammar framework.

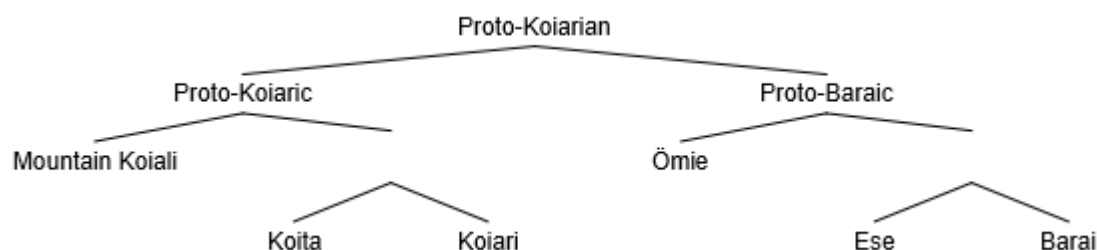
2.2.2 The peopling of Central Papua: Some preliminary observations (1969b)

This early study, entitled ‘The peopling of Central Papua: Some preliminary observations’ (Dutton 1969b), began with a particular interest in the Koita and Koiari people of Central Province where Dutton had first been involved as an education officer (Dutton 1969b:iii; cf. discussion in §2.2.1 and §2.2.7). In addition to archaeological (Seligmann 1910, *inter alia*), ethnographic, genetic, geographic and linguistic research, he also received helpful input from SIL-PNG members John Austing, Jim Parlier and Alan Pence (Dutton 1969b:iv).

Nearly a century ago, Ray (1929) classified all the languages into ‘groups’ and ‘sub-groups’, which became a foundation to all later work (Dutton 1969b:14). By the time of Dutton’s (1969b) research, Mulaha (Kwalean) was already extinct, the classification of the Goilalan family had been further established (Steinkraus and Pence 1964) as well as of the Kwalean, Manubaran and Yareban family (by Dutton himself; 1969b:4, 12), while the classification of the Mailuan family had already been established over a quarter of a century earlier (Capell 1943). Only Dagan remained outside of the classification discussion (presumably because it was also primarily outside of the Central Papua area; cf. Dutton 1971, §2.2.3 below).

Following Dutton’s background study, he moves into further particular study of the Koirian family, separating it into two subfamilies: Koiaric (composed of Koita [cf. Dutton 1975b], Koiari and Mountain Koiali; cf. Dutton 1969a) and Baraic (composed of Barai, Ese/Managalasi and Ömie. There is discussion of Biage, but at that point it was considered a dialect of Mountain Koiali (Dutton 1969b:53, 55, 59), while Namiae is not mentioned [as it possibly refers to the Ese village of Nami (cf. Dutton 1969b:86) since it is situated inside Ese on current maps]. Ethnographic details are given for each of the six language groups, such as the strong interrelationship between the Koita and Motu (Oceanic) peoples and the Koiari peoples’ reputation as ‘feared sorcerers’ (Dutton 1969b:37).

An interesting point, however without any evidence provided, is: “Linguistically, Kwaleans are unrelated closely to any other group...” (Dutton 1969b:72). It is hoped that further elaboration is provided in the subsequent studies (cf. Dutton 1996a, 2003, 2010). A Koirian family tree structure is provided, with updated names (Dutton 1969b:79; cf. Dutton 1969a:79) as shown below; it will be revisited upon examination of these above mentioned subsequent studies.



The remaining comparative data will be further investigated below.

2.2.3 Notes on the languages of the Rigo area of the Central District of Papua (1970)

In this next study, Dutton limits the research to just those languages spoken in the Rigo district of Central Province. Furthermore this research is quite Spartan, primarily providing only a quick summary, thus much is inconclusive. There are three Oceanic languages spoken in the district and six Papuan. Since the present research is focussed on the Papuan languages, only the names of the Oceanic languages will be mentioned: Keapara, Motu and Sinaugoro. Half of the Papuan languages (Barai, Humene and Koiari) were already described in the previous research discussed above.

Dutton (1970:884) mentions that at that point in time there was very little known and nothing published on the Kwalean and Manubaran languages. Currently this is no longer the situation for one language in each of these families (i.e. Uare/Kware and Doromu-Koki⁹ specifically; cf. Table 3 below). In spite of the meagre data, Dutton (1970:883) claims that the various Southeast Papuan families are distantly related, sharing about 10% of ‘basic’ vocabulary. In this latest research Dutton (1970:890) now claims that the extinct Mulaha language is most likely related to the other Kwalean languages (i.e. Humene and Uare) and includes data in the wordlists (sourced from English 1901).

2.2.4 Languages of South-East Papua (1971)

Dutton continues his research, moving to an area to the east of a line running north-south through Mt. Brown (9.6083025° South, 148.4860139° East) in the Owen Stanley Range in Oro Province. This entails a focus on the southern portions of Central and Oro Provinces and into Milne Bay. As with his previous research, this is very brief, including short descriptions of the language location, potential dialect situation, and lists of villages. Most of the languages in this area are Papuan (Dutton 1971:7); however at this point in time, two

⁹ I have had the privilege to be involved in language development and research over the last 37 years for three SE languages in three families: Goilalan: Fuyug from 1988–2000, Manubaran: Doromu-Koki from 2001–present and Kwalean: Uare from 2005–2011.

languages, Maisin [mbq] and Doga [dgg], were unclassified. Dutton (1971:8) leaned toward Strong's (1911b:383) position that Maisin is Oceanic with strong influence from Papuan languages. Both Maisin and Doga are currently classified as such (cf. Eberhard et al. 2025). The other Oceanic languages are not discussed.

The Papuan languages in this area are in four families: Binanderean, Yareban, Dagan and Mailuan (Dutton 1971:9). Of these, the last three are considered part of Southeast Papuan. Languages of each of these families are listed: **Yareban** with four: Bariji, Yareba, Doriri (or Moikodi) and Abia (or Aneme Wake) [Dutton 1971:12], **Dagan** with eight: Onjob, Maiwa, Jimajima (or Dima), Daga/Dimunga, Mapena, Gwende(na) (or Umanakaina), Ginuman/Dime and Sona (or Kanasi or Sirio) (Dutton 1971:15), **Mailuan** with five languages: Magi/Mailu, Domu, Morawa, Binahari and Bauwaki (Dutton 1971:19). Daga, having several dialects, is purported to be the largest Papuan language in the southeast Papua area (Dutton 1971:18) and interestingly Bauwaki is described as a bridge between the Mailuan and Yareban families, having features from both (Dutton 1971:25); conceivably through borrowing.

2.2.5 A checklist of languages and present-day villages of central and south-east mainland Papua (1973)

In this publication Dutton presents an alphabetised list of languages and village names (along with population figures) for Central and Oro Provinces and those parts of Milne Bay and Morobe with SE Papuan (and Binanderean) language speakers. Unfortunately, these names and figures are limited in usefulness, since the source of data is quite out of date (Department of District Administration's *Village Directory* of 1968). Nevertheless they document some important past historical facts.

2.2.6 Studies in languages of Central and Southeast Papua (1975a)

This volume, edited by Dutton, provides grammatical descriptions of several Oceanic and Papuan languages in the area which includes Central and Oro Provinces and parts of Morobe and Milne Bay Provinces. At that time, Dutton (1975a:ix) says regarding the SE Papuan (then identified as a 'Koiarian-Manubaran-Yareban stock') that "...there is as yet no clear-cut evidence for subgrouping them in any one way above the family level," most likely as:

“...most of these remained unstudied (except for isolated cases like Mailu (or Magi), Fuyuge, Tauade, Binandere) and their interrelationships unclear until the 1960's (sic) when research workers from the Summer Institute of Linguistics...and the Australian National University began showing an increasing interest in this area. Since then the whole area has been

systematically resurveyed with the results already indicated and many of the hitherto little-known and previously unstudied languages have been studied in some depth (e.g., Kunimaipa, Koiari, Mountain Koiali, Barai, Ömie, Managalasi, Daga, Yareba, Korafe, Suená, Guhu-Samane, and Yeletnye).” (Dutton 1975a:x)

As they were being researched, Dutton made an effort to publish what was then available as grammatical sketches, with the thought that: “Such a set of studies...would provide the necessary reliable data upon which the now-complete early classificatory work could and should be refined....” (Dutton 1975a:x). Those Southeast Papuan grammatical sketches include four Koiarian languages: Koita, Mountain Koiali, Barai and Ömie as well as Mailu/Magi (Mailuan) and Yareba (Yareban) [cf. Dutton 1975a:xi]. And regrettably, at that time: “Some, like those for the Kwalean and Manubaran Families, are still very rudimentary and need further attention...” (Dutton 1975a:xii), though he feels that better descriptions are nevertheless in hand. And in retrospect we can see that has indeed transpired.

2.2.7 A Koita grammar sketch and vocabulary (1975b)

This is one of the chapters included in Dutton (1975a) above. The information here is incorporated into Dutton’s other early research.

2.2.8 South-eastern Trans-New Guinea phylum languages (1975c)

This chapter in Wurm’s (1975) publication on Papuan languages is Dutton’s final publication for the 1970s era (excepting the 1977 word study). It is the last chapter in a section on the TNG phylum. Here Dutton summarises and/or restates information from his previous research in an attempt to give a typological overview of the languages.

Dutton (1975c:621) claims that at this point in time the: “...interrelationship of Trans-New Guinea Phylum languages in south-east Papua New Guinea is fairly clear. What is needed now is more detailed descriptive and comparative work in as many languages and families as possible.” These points appear contradictory as we particularly see in discussions of families with very limited data (Dutton 1975c:621 and cf. Dutton 1975a:xii): “At the same time there are still families such as the Kwalean and Manubaran which are virtually unknown and should be given top priority in future research programmes.” Thus, the imperative is given for this present research.

Dutton begins this study by citing his sources (Dutton 1975c:621–622). He also made use of unpublished field notes (1969b), which if available, would prove invaluable today. Again, Dutton (1975c:622) looks to future research to provide a clearer analysis: “In the process no

attempt will be made to distinguish characteristics of individual families as such. This is a task for the future....”

A typological overview of the SE Papuan languages is provided with points such as the following (Dutton 1975c:622–623):

- There are usually two series of plosives [distinguished by voicing, at three to four points of articulation (bilabial, alveolar, velar and glottal)], some fricatives, two nasals (m, n), a tap/flap and lateral approximant and two semivowels.
- There are usually the five cardinal vowels.
- Some languages are tonal,¹⁰ and stress is ‘important’ and related to intonation which can be rather complex.
- Morphophonemic rules are complex.
- The first and second person pronouns ‘generally’ follow Wurm’s (1972)¹¹ Set I type; the pronouns do not distinguish gender and seldom clusivity. In some families dual forms are derived from other forms and most add a suffix to a pronoun to indicate possession.
- Verb suffixes may indicate S/A and/or O person and/or number and TAM.
- Medial verbs indicate same or different subject; in some such as Koiarian they are quite simple.¹²
- In some languages/families, verb stems change to indicate pluractionality.
- Plurality of nouns is not indicated in the morphology except in some kinship terms or through limited reduplication.¹³
- Noun classes are rare, but when they do occur they are limited to distinctions of alienability.
- Numeral systems are limited to 1, 2, 2+1, 2+2, 1 hand or 1, 2, 3, 2+2, 1 hand.¹⁴ Use of body parts in counting has only been reported in the Yareban family (Ray 1907:364).

¹⁰ Tone was not mentioned in his previous research. I have only verified tone as documented in Amam/Weri (cf. Boxwell and Boxwell 1966b:87–88, Boxwell 1990:10, 12 and Boxwell 1992a:3). Evans (1992:3) states about Barai: “Word pitch is contrastive but has low functional load.” He then goes on to provide two examples. More data and explanation are needed, especially as Olson instead defines pitch in terms of stress (Olson 1975:474). Since no other tonal analysis has been described, it is unfortunate there is no indication as to which of ‘some’ languages Dutton felt this phenomenon applies.

¹¹ Unfortunately, I have yet to locate a copy.

¹² This is indeed the case for Koiari, however Barai, also a Koiarian language, has one of the most complex systems for SE Papuan languages (cf. Bradshaw 2024b:248).

¹³ This agrees with Manubaran: Doromu-Koki (cf. Bradshaw 2024a:259).

- The languages have S/A O V constituent order.
- The subordinate clause precedes the main clause and there is an absence of conjunctions.¹⁵
- There is no passive.

While somewhat helpful, many more specific and objective details are needed, that hopefully the newer research will provide. Discrepancies will also be addressed below (cf. §2.3.1). Without examples, many of these are much too vague. From these points Dutton (1975c:623–624) moves on to discuss variances with TNG:

- Pronoun forms do not consistently belong to one pronoun set (cf. Wurm 1972).
- There are no complex consonants or complex syllable patterns.
- There is not a wide range of allophonic variation.
- Noun classes are rare. (Note: this was already mentioned as a typological feature above.)
- SE Papuan languages have differing forms of negatives (cf. Table 2 below).
- There are no changes or affixes to indicate interrogative.¹⁶

As above, these are perhaps rather vague because they are quite preliminary. It is hoped that the newer research will remedy this situation. Dutton (1975c:624) continues with lexical correspondences, claiming that the SE Papuan families are between 10% and 40% cognate, citing a few examples. Not surprisingly the lowest percentage (~10%) is seen for the Kwalean¹⁷ and Manubaran families, since they have very little available data. It is interesting, that for the Binanderean family, related on the stock level (Dutton 1975c:627), “...these percentages do suggest that Binanderean languages are more closely related to those elsewhere and act as a link between them and the remaining South-East Trans-New Guinea

¹⁴ A review of three languages from three different families all refute this claim in differing ways: Goilalan: Fuyug 1, 2, 2+1, 2+2, 2+2+1 (Bradshaw 2007e:45), Kwalean: Uare 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (Kikkawa 1993, §5.1.7.1) and Manubaran: Doromu-Koki 1, 2, 3, hand-line (i.e. hand-thumb), hand (Bradshaw 2024a:169).

¹⁵ Cf. Bradshaw 2024b for counter examples.

¹⁶ This has not been my observation; while the Doromu-Koki second person singular imperative is indeed zero marked (Bradshaw 2024b:289), other forms are not (Bradshaw 2024b:290–292). Fuyug imperatives are always marked (Bradshaw 2012:65–66).

¹⁷ At this point in time Dutton (1975c:628–629) proposes that this family may even be ‘some kind of isolate’. [He mentions a grammar by Dr Strong, which unfortunately was not published (Dutton 1975c:636).] Again, it is hoped the new data will clarify this issue.

Phylum languages.”¹⁸ Dutton (1975c:628) also claims that the “...Koiarian languages seem to act as a link between the others. ...this linking position is to be suspected of being the result of undetected borrowings rather than of genetic relationship....” In this same vein, Kunimaipa is seen as a bridge language between the northern (Weri and Biangai) and southern (Tauade and Fuyug) Goilalan languages (Dutton 1975c:631). Again, it is hoped that the newer research will further clarify many of these issues, as at this point the counter-claim about borrowings is unclear (cf. Dutton 1977, 1982).

The present work compares the families for various grammatical issues, though again with limited data, these findings are marginally helpful with several in fact being questionable. They are compiled in Table 2 below. One division is already evident with the negatives between the northern (Goilalan, Koiarian and Kwalean) and southern (Manubaran, Yareban, Mailuan and Dagan) families. For others, newer research will eliminate various discrepancies, particularly for Manubaran and Kwalean. Presently there should also be more than sufficient evidence for the questionable items for the Goilalan family.

Table 2: *Comparison of Southeast Papuan grammatical features (Dutton 1975b:629-630)*

Family	Subject markers	Object reference number (No.) or form	S/A/TAM O or O S/A/TAM	Pluractionality	Negatives: <i>me, bebe, meme</i> or <i>ide, da/ya</i>
Goilalan	?	?	?	-	<i>me, bebe, meme</i>
Koiarian	+	No.	O S/A/TAM	+	<i>me, bebe, meme</i>
Kwalean	+	form	S/A/TAM O	?	<i>me, bebe, meme</i>
Manubaran	+	form	S/A/TAM O	?	<i>ide, da/ya</i>
Yareban	-	No.	-object reference	-	<i>ide, da/ya</i>
Mailuan	+	form	S/A/TAM O	?	<i>ide, da/ya</i>
Dagan	-	form	O S/A/TAM	+	<i>ide, da/ya</i>

Dutton (1975b:630–631) concludes: “In short there is a conflicting pattern of relationship evident at different levels of structure in South-East Trans-new Guinea Phylum languages which does not allow for them being subgrouped further in any one way on the present evidence.” This gives further confirmation that more research is needed.

A final section provides summary statements about each language, including location and previous research details. This is followed by a 100-year (1874-1974) expedient history of

¹⁸ This may be a viable topic for future research, which would need to include all the previous Binanderean comparative studies.

what research was done in the area. While we have examined his initial foundation which was laid in the 1970s, Dutton provided some further research (1982, 1999, 2003 and 2010a, 2010b), which will be incorporated into the updated research to follow.

2.3 Comprehensive Southeast Papuan research

Table 3 below documents the research and data on SE Papuan languages to date, including literacy and translation materials (presently 711 items). As more resources are produced and/or discovered, the table will continually need to be updated. Items indicated in **bold** are ones written since Dutton’s 1970s analyses (currently 193 items).¹⁹ Previous material not consulted will also be discussed as relevant. Although a lot of research has been done since the early to mid-1970s, there are still some languages for which this is not the case. No further research has been conducted in eight languages (approximately 21% of the number of languages, or 5% of SE Papuan total population): Koirian: Namiae; Kwalean: Mulaha and Humene; Mailuan: Laua and Morawa; Dagan: Dima/Jimajima, Mapena and Onjob. Two are extinct (Mulaha and Laua) and one threatened (Onjob), but the remainder are viable. It is unfortunate that these have not had any recent research, and especially Onjob, which is noncontiguous with the other Dagan languages, threatened and soon likely to be lost. Totals for each category for each language are included in brackets at the end of the entry [e.g. Biangai–Grammar (17)].

¹⁹ Note: As discussed above, most of Dutton’s research is very brief introductory material; for lack of a better label, they have been listed in the ‘Grammar’ column, yet for the most part (excepting Dutton 1975a and 1975b), they do not provide any comprehensive grammatical analyses.

Table 3: Southeast Papuan research

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
<i>Goilalan</i> <i>Biangai</i> [big]		Dubert, M. 1965, 1976a, b, c; 1977a, b; Dubert, M. & R. 1978; Dubert R. 1965, 1966a, b, 1969; Dubert R. & M. 1975, 1978a, b; Dutton 1973, 1975c; Robinson & Dubert nd. (17)	Dubert, R. & M nd. (1)	Dubert, M. 1967; Dubert, M. & R. 1969, 1970, 1971; Dubert, M., R, Dubert & Koni 1973; Dubert, M., R. Dubert & Lucas 1966; Dubert, M. & Mambu 1967; Dubert, M. & Koni 1975a, b, 1976; Koni	Dubert, R. & M. 1974, 1981, nd (3)	Dubert, M. 1992; Dubert, R. & M. 1973, 1975; <i>Biangai organised phonology data.</i> 2011;²⁰ <i>Organised phonology data</i> 1994 (5)		Dubert, M. & R. 1981 (1)	<i>Anotogi ngago wik yisu kilisiyegi langaira</i> [The New Testament (Biangai)] 1985 (1)	

²⁰ Note: The four *Organised Phonology Data* papers for Biangai, Daga, Ömie and Umanakaina, published in 2011, were all produced by SIL-PNG personnel who had access to various earlier documents written by SIL-PNG researchers for those languages. (The 1994 versions may have been similarly compiled.) Data from those manuscripts was keyboarded into a template to produce these documents. Some of the source documents are currently available while other manuscripts are not. Therefore, those which are unavailable are not included in these lists.

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
<i>Amam/Weri</i> [wer]		Aki & Pennington 2013; Boxwell H. 1975; Boxwell M. 1967, 1980, 1990; Boxwell, M. & H. 1969, 1980; Dutton 1973, 1975c (9)		1972, 1973, 1975, 1976 (13) Boxwell, H. & M. 1965, 1966a, 1968, 1969a, b, 1975a, b, c, 1976, 1982a, b, 1992, nda, ndb; Boxwell, M. 1975, 1976a, b, c; 1992b; Kamboi 2001; Kamboi et al. 1979; Maip 1976; Puem & Robin- son 1982; Robin- son, Janet & Robin-			Boxwell, H. & M. 1966; Boxwell, M. 1992a; Boxwell, M. & H. 1971; Rule 1965m (4)		<i>Ngönën</i> <i>pepewer</i> [The New Testament (Weri)]. 1984; Translation nuggets (Amam/ Weri) 1967 (2)	

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
<i>Kunimaipa</i> [kup]	Bjorkman 1968; Geary 1982 ; Pence 1974; Shaw 1974 (4)	Dutton 1973; 1975c' Geary 1970b, 1977 ; Geary & Bjorkman 1969a' Kerr 1964, 2012 ; Pence 1963b, 1965a, 1968; Pence et al. 1970; (11)		son, Jerry 1979 ' Robin- son, Jerry 1982 (25) <i>Abanariz</i> <i>tah Ńeti</i> <i>goegoen</i> 1985 ; Auvima et al. 1983 ; Bjork- man 1978 , 1986a, b , c, d, e ; Gariai & Bjork- man 2001 ' Geary 1970a, 1974a, b, c ; 1990 ; Geary & Bjork- man 1969b, 1977 ; Geary & Rengko 1973a, b;		Geary 1992 ; Pence 1964, 1965b, 1966, 1971 (5)		Steinkraus & Pence 1964 (1)	<i>Baiñetinavo</i> <i>z tep tokatit</i> [The New Testament (Kunimaipa)] 1989 , 2002 ; Pence 1963a (2)	Pence et al. 1976 (1)

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
<i>Tauade</i> [ttd]		Dutton 1973, 1975c; Stutzman, V. 1990a,	Stutz- man, V. & R. 2016 (1)	Gujoro 1962; Holmes et al. 1992; Kahobo teachers & Bjork- man 1993; Peraia 1993; Rauke & Bjork- man 1983; Ravei & Bjorkma n 1975a, b, c; Suormala & Bjork- man 1986a, b; Wood & Geary 1992; Zavit 1986 (29)			Stutzman, V. & R. 1992 (1)	Steinkraus & Pence 1964 (1)		

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
<i>Fuyug</i> [fuy]	Barthes nd.; Bradshaw 1989; Delbos 1985; Dubuy 1931; Dupeyrat 1954; Fastre 1939; Hirsch 1985; Strong 1911a; Williamson 1912 (9)	b; 1993a, b, 2016; Egidi 1907 (8) Bradshaw 1988a, b; 1992, 1998, 1999a, b; 2001; 2007d, e; in progress; Dutton 1973, 1975c; Ray 1912b (13)	Brad- shaw 2000; 2021c; <i>Dictionn aire Fujuge/ français nd, vol 1 (a-g), vol 2 (i-m), Vol 3 (n- v) nd.;</i> Ray 1912a (7)	<i>Alphabet book 1992; Alphabet charts. 1993-5; Andedan an di bab dir inog nd.;</i> <i>Asolem ur enamb— 2 Jesu Christe di je ife malam Bab, Deov es 1952; Bachelier 1943-49, 1949-58, 1953a, b, 1954a, b’ Bachelier & Miria 1947; Cadoux 1958; Catechis m galib</i>	Bradshaw 1997 (1)	Bradshaw 1991; 1996b, c; 2007f, 2011b (5)	Bradshaw 1990a, b, c; 1996a (4)	Bradshaw 1994; Steinkraus & Pence 1964 (2)	<i>Apostoli mur av e vili mad</i> [Acts of the apostles]. nd.; Barthes 1973; Bibla- Vision–The story of Christmas 1982; <i>Evangelio Matheo sancta ur ided nd.;</i> <i>Evangelio u malele</i> 1951; <i>Exode</i> nd.; <i>Fal hu hasol hul apud 1992; Je silin hele u rave asi. Luka sante ur ided nd.Je silin hele ur av asi Marko sante ur ided</i> 1979; <i>Jesu ge sol hene ye ifa mala</i> 1992;	<i>Fujuge wordlist 1975; Fuyuge language, Chirima wordlist 1973; Fuyuge, Central District area, Goialla (Woitape) 1961; Purnell 1988b, c (5)</i>

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists	
				nd.’ <i>Catechism of Chrisitna doctrine- first part</i> 1950; <i>Catholic reader, Fujuge reader</i> no 3 1957; <i>Chatechism I, I, III</i> nd.; <i>Confirmatio- Spiritu Sante dir uatsi tela/Euka ristia-Nu ge val ando na nu adorere.</i> nd.; <i>Deo ande tale tomalam an u Babe</i> 1954.; <i>Dil av heneng hul</i>						<i>Jesu silav koy an hene angideda ye ifa mala</i> 1993. <i>Jesu ur av asi buk 1, 2, 3, 4, 5</i> 1977, 1981; Josep hul ave 1996; <i>Luka sancta ur evangelio</i> nd.; <i>Mak hul buk</i> 1994; Marko sante ur evangelio 1974; Sourrisseau 1987; <i>Sunday readings year A, B, C</i> nd; The gospel of John nd. (25)	

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
				<i>malel</i> 1996.; <i>Dil</i> <i>tubuning</i> <i>mul mad</i> 1991; <i>Dir</i> <i>amede</i> <i>Jesu</i> <i>Christe u</i> <i>passio</i> nd.; <i>Dominic</i> <i>a u missa</i> <i>ur'evang</i> <i>elio</i> 1952; Dubuy 1949, 1950; <i>Eklesia</i> <i>katolike</i> <i>u</i> <i>katekism</i> <i>e,</i> <i>Fujug'u</i> <i>butsi</i> <i>jalamab'</i> <i>ul'a</i> 1926.; <i>Evan-</i> <i>gelio</i> <i>dominika</i> <i>tsi tabula</i> nd.; Fastre						

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
				1948; <i>Fujug'u</i> <i>kis u</i> <i>buke</i> 1939; <i>Fujuge</i> <i>reader</i> <i>number 1</i> (<i>Fairy</i> <i>stories</i>) 1957; <i>Fujuge</i> <i>reader</i> <i>number 1</i> (<i>Malele</i> <i>ur'apude</i>) 1948. <i>Fujuge</i> <i>reader</i> <i>number</i> 2. nd.; <i>Fujuge</i> <i>reader</i> <i>number 3</i> (<i>Fairy</i> <i>stories</i>) 1957; Gremaud 1952; <i>Hale</i> <i>gudub</i> <i>and ala</i> <i>amuli</i> <i>kulubing</i> <i>ala</i> 1996; <i>Hoy ge</i>						

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
				<i>ovol bidi</i> 1992; <i>Huni dal</i> <i>hul sey?</i> 1992; <i>Hymn</i> <i>book</i> 1931; <i>Ivola ala</i> <i>Gali ala</i> 1991. <i>Iyale sog</i> 1992; <i>Kolos 'u</i> <i>majame</i> 1956, nd; <i>Krus ur</i> <i>enamb</i> nd.; <i>Majam u</i> <i>buk nd.</i> <i>Malele</i> <i>ur'apude</i> nd.; <i>Mename</i> <i>na u</i> <i>book</i> 1950; <i>Meneme</i> <i>ne hul</i> <i>holof</i> 1997. <i>Na</i> <i>ge tos ye</i> 1992; Norin & Nomai						

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
				1936; <i>Ononge</i> <i>reader 1</i> , 2 1951, 7; <i>Ordo</i> <i>missae</i> <i>ad</i> <i>experime</i> <i>ntum</i> 1980; <i>Ovol he</i> <i>ge boye</i> 1990. <i>Ovol</i> <i>kagavan</i> <i>Pugi</i> 1992; <i>Papua</i> <i>New</i> <i>Guinea</i> 1991. Prayers, hymns book nd.; <i>Ritual of</i> <i>baptism</i> nd.; <i>Sacrame</i> <i>nts et</i> <i>benedicti</i> <i>ons</i> . 1966. Sicard 1958, 1959, nd; Simona						

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
				1944; <i>Story charts for vernacu- lar compo- nent 1996-8; Sunday service (Katet- kist) nd.; Suwind Palupalu ge tauniti ga 1992; The Ononghe news Vol 1 1946; Various stories 1992; Yo da kolosi 1994 (69)</i>						
Koiarian										
<i>Koiaric</i>										
<i>Biage</i> [bdf]		Dutton 1973. 1975c (2)						Hiley, Gray & Retsema 2015 (1)		Retsema 2006a, b (2)
<i>Mt. Koiali</i> [kpx]	Garland, R. & S. 1974a (1)	Dutton 1969a,	Garland, S. & R.	Auka 1973;	Garland, R. & S. 1980 (1)	Garland, R. & S.			<i>Iesu Keliso hotoe tumu</i>	

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
		1973, 1975a, c, 2010a Garland, R. nd; Garland, R & S. 1972, 1975; Garland, S. 1980 (9)	1983 (1)	Garland, R. & S. 1974, 1982; <i>Nogoli buka:</i> <i>buka 2</i> 1983 (4)		1971; <i>Mountain Koiali organised phonology data.</i> 1983; Organised phonology data 1994 (3)			[The New Testament (Mountain Koiali)] 1981 (1)	
<i>Koita/Koitabu</i> [kqi]		Dutton 1969a, 1970, 1973, 1975b, c, 2010a (6)								
<i>(Grass) Koiari</i> [kbbk]		Dutton 1969a, 1973, 1975a, c, 1989, 1996, 2010a (7)	Dutton 2003 (1)					Dutton 2010b (1)		Dutton 1970 (1)
<i>Baraic</i> <i>Ömie</i> [aom]	Austing, J & J. 1967; Eliason. J. & K. 1985; McElhanon 1974; Rohatynskyj 1978 (4)	Austing, J. 1967, 1974; Austing, J. & J. 1977; Austing & Upia 1975: Dutton 1968, 1969a, 1973,	Omie to English diction- ary 1986; Omie diction- ary 1995 (2)	<i>A</i> <i>mamieh</i> <i>u diehi e</i> <i>ade hesi</i> <i>suroho.</i> 1985; A <i>mamieh</i> <i>u</i> <i>morovar</i> <i>e jo hesi</i> <i>suroho.</i>	Austing, J. 1974a , 1991, 1992a; Austing et al. 1991 (4)	<i>Austing, J.</i> <i>1992b, nd;</i> <i>Omie</i> <i>organised</i> <i>phonology</i> <i>data.</i> 2011; Tobbitt, M & A. nd. (2)		Austing, J. 1983 (1)	<i>God-are</i> <i>jögoru i'oho</i> [The New Testament (Ömie)] 1991; Translation nuggets (Ömie). 1967 (2)	

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
		1975a, c, 2010a (10)		1985; Aomi texts; Aseari, & Kohari. 1986; Austing & Upia 1984, 1986; Austing & Otire 1990a, b, c; Eliason 1991; <i>I'jo i'jo jo hesi Surolio.</i> 1986; <i>Jö Mami'oh u'o I'ohu'o Hesi Suroho.</i> 1986; <i>Juhonini 'e jö hesi suroho.</i> 1986; Omie myths 1, nd, Omie myths/te xts, nd;						

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
				<i>Poru hu morovad e jo hesi johoje ehi joe go go jio'ame. 1986; Uëhoro jö hesi suroho. 1986; Uhu'e jo hesi suroho. 1985 (16)</i>						
<i>Ese/Managalasi</i> [mcq]	Chenoweth 1968 (1)	Dutton 1969a, 1973, 1975c, 2010a ; Parlier, James 1964, 1970a, b; Parlier & Healey 1978 ; Parlier et al. 1973 (9)	Parlier, J. & J. 1981 (1)	Brown, G. & C. 1976; Brown, G. 1986; Chúrúru & Parlier 1998; <i>Godoni javaa.</i> 2005; Gwyther- Jones & Parlier. 1969a, b, c, d; Orempok a & 		Parlier, J. & J. 1963, 1992, 1999 (3)		<i>Godoni vu'a maiu'ina</i> [The New Testament (Ese/ Managalasi)] 1975, 1999 (1)		

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
<i>Barai</i> [bbb]				Parlier 1969; Parlier, James nd; Parlier, Judith 1964a, b, 1965, 1966, 1969a, b, c, d, 1970a, b, c; Parlier J. & J. 1969a, b; 1976a, b (25)						
		Dutton 1969a, 1970, 1973, 1975a, c, 2010a; Foley & Olson 1985; Olson, M. 1975, 1978, 1981; Oraro et al. 2015 (11)		<i>Barai</i> <i>Sidove,</i> <i>Ire Ro</i> <i>anu</i> <i>Binobino</i> 1986; <i>Barai</i> <i>Suvuare</i> 1987; <i>Barai</i> <i>Vua</i> <i>Varavar</i> <i>aei.</i> 1987; Evans, B. 1981, 1984,		Evans, P. 1992 (1)		Olson, M. 1979 (1)	<i>Godido vua</i> <i>maeje</i> [Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Ruth, Nehemiah and the New Testament (Barai)] 1994, 2006 (1)	Dutton 1970 (1)

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
				1988a, b, 2004; Evans & Sanamu 1983; Evan & Kesiri 1997; Evans & Savaiko 1984a, b, 1993; Evans, P. 1981, 1989; Evans, P. & B. 1980; Evans et al. 1980.; Gavara & Malai 1993; Kajae & Olson 1980; Mara 1983; Moere 1984; Murua 1985; Olson, D. 1978; Olson, M. 1985;						

[illegible]

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
<i>Doromu-Koki</i> [kqc]	Bradshaw 2006b; 2007c; Campbell 2007; Magio 2016; Purcell 2021 (5)	Bradshaw 2006a; 2007d; 2008b; 2012; 2019a, b, c; 2020a, b, c, d; 2021d, e, f; 2022a, c; 2023a, b; 2024a, b; 2025; Dutton 1970, 1973, 1975c, 2019 (25)	Bradsha w 2007a; 2018, 2021a, b (4)	Babada 2009; Bomena, L. et al. 2003; Bomena, P. 2009a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, 2010a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v; Bomena, P. & Babada 2009; Bomena, P. & Gabnoa 2006; Bomena, P. & Robin 2010; Ero 2007a, b; Gobona 2007;	Bokana et al. 2002; Bradshaw 2022b (2)	Bradshaw 2002; 2007f; 2010a, b; 2016; Kikkawa 1999a (6)	Bradshaw 2007b; 2011a (2)	Bradshaw 2004; 2008a; Lambrecht 2002a, b; Quigley, E. & S. 1993 (5)	Bomena, L. & Ero 2001, 2007; Bomena, L. et al. 2007a, b; Dagere & Toma 2010; <i>Sei di Uka Ago Ruaka 2017; Sei di Uka Ago Ruaka di buka bedakai 2011; Translation workshop participants 2007; Tuga 2002 (9)</i>	Doromu survey wordlist 1973 Purnell 1988a (2)

[illegible]

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
<i>Yareba</i> [yrb]		Weimer 1978 (5) Dutton 1973, 1975a, c; Weimer, H. 1963, 1978; Weimer, H. & N. 1970, 1975 (7)	Weimer, H. & N. 1974 (1)	Daru & Weimer 1973a, b; Weimer, N. 1973 (3)		Weimer, H. 1992c (1)			<i>Godinu dubu kobere sina</i> [The New Testament (Yareba)].1 973, 1987 (1)	
<i>Nawaru</i> [nwr]		Dutton 1975c; Weimer, H. 1978 (2)								
<i>Moikodi</i> [mkp]		Dutton 1969b, 1971, 1973, 1975c; Weimer, H. 1978 (5)				Weimer, H. 1992b (1)				
<i>Aneme Wake</i> [aby]		Dutton 1969b, 1971, 1973, 1975c; Weimer, H. 1978 (5)				Weimer, H. 1992a (1)			<i>Godinu irau wake</i> [The New Testament (Aneme Wake)] 1988 (1)	
Mailuan										
<i>Domu</i> [dof]		Dutton						Woodland		Ray 1938

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
		1971, 1973, 1975c (3)						1985c (1)		(1)
<i>Laua/Labu/Lauwa</i> [luf]		Dutton 1973, 1975c (2)						Thomson 1975b (1)		Ray 1938 (1)
<i>Magi/Mailu</i> [mgu]	Abbi 1964; Dutton 1999 ; Firth 1952; Malinowski 1915 (4)	Dutton 1969b, 1971, 1973, 1975a, c; Saville 1912; Thomson 1975c (6)	Lanyon- Orgill 1944; Saville 1935a, b (3)					Thomson 1975b (1)	King 2013, 2014 (2)	Ray 1938; Saville & Blust 1980 (2)
<i>Morawa</i> [mze]		Dutton 1969b, 1971, 1973, 1975c (4)								Ray 1938 (1)
<i>Bauwaki/Bawaki</i> [bwk]		Dutton 1969b, 1971, 1973, 1975c (4)						Woodland 1985a (1)		Ray 1938 (1)
<i>Binahari(-Neme)</i> [bxz]		Dutton 1969b, 1971, 1973, 1975c (4)						Woodland 1985b (1)		
Dagan										
<i>Maiwa</i> [mti]		Dutton 1969b, 1971, 1973,				<i>Maiwa</i> <i>Organised</i> <i>Phonology</i> <i>Data.</i>		Nakamura, T. & Y. 2001a (1)	<i>Gae</i> <i>Mataiwa</i> [The New Testament	

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
		1975c; Nakamu- ra, T. & Y. 1995, 2001b, 2002 (7)				1993; Nakamu- ra, T. & Y. 2008; nd; Organised phonology data 2008 (4)			(Maiwa)] 2011 (1)	
<i>Daga</i> [dgz]	Jesudason, D. & W.L. 1998; McElhanon 1974; Murane, E. & J. 1974; Murane, J. & E. 1971 (4)	Dutton 1971, 1973, 1975c ; Murane, E. 1965a, 1966, 1970b, 1974; Murane, E. & J. 1965b, 1966b, 1967d; Murane, J. & E. 1965 (11)	Murane, E. & J. 1963; Murane, J. & E. 1974b (2)	Daga text, Daga text; Jesuda- son, D. & W.L. 1991a; 1992a, b; 1993a, b, c; 1994a, b; 1996; Murane, E. 1965, 1970a; Murane & Murane 1966a, b, 1967a, b, c; 1975a, b (17)	Murane, E. & J. 1970; Murane, J. & E. 1975, 1992 (3)	<i>Daga Organised Phonology Data.</i> 2011; Healey 1965; Murane, E. 1994; Murane, E. & J. 1965, 1972, 1973 (6)		Murane, J. & E. nd (1)	<i>Nop ewakewa Iesu Keriso nop oit mega kakaewa [The New Testament (Daga)].197 4, 2004;</i> Translation nuggets (Daga) 1967 (2)	
<i>Dima/(Bayu) Jimajim(a)</i> [jma]		Dutton 1971, 1973, 1975c (3)		Debou- wa et al. 2009; Petter-						Ray 1938 (1)

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
				son & Gupi 2009 (2)						
<i>Mapena</i> [mnm]		Dutton 1971, 1973, 1975c (3)								
<i>Turaka</i> [trh]								Troolin 1998 (1)		
<i>Umanakaina</i> [gdn]		Dutton 1971, 1973, 1975c; Evensen, S. 1993, 1996; Evensen, S. & I. 1986; (6)		Evensen, I. nd; Jesuda- son, D. 1990; Jesuda- son, D. & W. 1990, 1991b (4)	Evensen, S. 1993b (1)	Evensen, S. & I. 1982; Evensen, S. 1994; <i>Umana- kaina Organised Phonology Data.</i> 1992, 2011 (4)		Evensen, S. & I. 1996; Jesudason, D. & W.L. 1991a (2)	<i>Iya yonai</i> [The New Testament (Umanakai na)] 1999 (1)	
<i>Onjob</i> [onj]		Dutton 1971, 1973, 1975c (3)								Ray 1938 (1)
<i>Ginuman/Dime</i> [gnm]		Dutton 1971, 1973, 1975c (3)						Royer et al. 1997 (1)		
<i>Kanasi</i> [soq]	Royer, G. & M. 1990a (1)	Dutton 1971, 1973, 1975c; Pappen- hagen, R.	Budita & Waiapa- na 2005; Kanasi- English	Budita et al. 2012a, b; Budita et al.	Pappen- hagen, J. 1987; Royer, G. 1993; Royer, G. & M. 1992 (3)	Pappen- hagen, J. 1988; Royer, G. 1993; Royer, G.		Bugenhagen 1981; Royer, G. 1993a; Royer et al. 1997; Rucker 1980 (4)	<i>Ina sanaa gagalowa</i> [The New Testament (Kanasi)] 1996 (1)	

Family/languages	Ethnography	Grammar	Lexicon	Literacy	Orthography	Phonology	Program plan (language development)	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Wordlists
		1986, 1988; Royer, G. 1994a, b, c; Royer, G. & M. 1990 (9)	diction- ary 1990; Pappen- hagen, R. & J. 1988; Royer, G. 1998 (4)	2010a, b; Epaia et al. 1966; Light et al. 2010a, b; <i>PNG flag book</i> 2009 (8)		& M. 1994, 1997 (4)				

2.3.1 More recent research findings

It is evident from the table above that many domains of research have been covered. Some, however, will not provide further insights into SE and/or TNG typology, but nevertheless show vigorous language development in many of these language communities over a wide span of time, including literacy work and Bible translation.²¹ Linguistic materials include 13 grammar sketches (Ömie 1975, Barai 1975; Daga 1975; Ese/Managalasi 1975; Koiari 1975; Koita 1975; Kunimaipa 1975; Magi/Mailu 1975; Mt. Koiali 1975; Yareba 1975; Kanasi 1986; Fuyug 2007; Doromu-Koki 2012), five PhD theses (Mailu 1964; Koiari 1969; Barai 1981; Weri 1990 and Doromu-Koki 2022) and 13 dictionaries (Magi/Mailu 1935, 1944; Daga 1963, 1974; Yareba 1974; Ese/Managalasi 1981; Mt. Koiali 1983; Ömie 1986, 1995; Koiari 2003; Kanasi 1988, 1990, 1998, 2005; Uare 2005; Tauade 2016; Fuyug 1912, 2000, 2021, nd.; Doromu-Koki 2007, 2018, 2021; Biangai nd.). Other works include ethnographies, sociolinguistic surveys and wordlists.²²

3. Preliminary conclusions

Dutton has laid the groundwork through his 1970s research, including some brief initial conclusions on SE typological features and their variances with TNG. The amount of new data since that time is phenomenal, which means the task ahead is quite large. However, while there is substantially more recent research and language development, some gaps remain.

- Only one of the three Kwalean languages, Uare, has had adequate research. While one language, Mulaha, is extinct, of the two remaining languages, one has had more research than the other: Uare (15 items) versus **Humene** (a vigorous language with only five items of research, none of which have been since the 1970s research). Therefore the subgroup has 50% adequate representation.
- Both of the Manubaran languages have had research, although one considerably more than the other: Doromu-Koki (124 items) versus **Maria** [a vigorous language with just seven items, only one (Purnell 1988d; a brief report without any linguistic data) of which has been since the 1970s research and does not include any linguistic data].

²¹ Fifteen New Testaments to date (secondary dates indicate a revision): Yareba 1973, 1987; Daga 1974, 2004; Mt. Koiali 1981; Weri 1984; Biangai 1985; Aneme Wake 1988; Kunimaipa 1989, 2002; Ömie 1991; Barai 1994, 2006; Kanasi 1996; Ese/Managalasi 1999; Umanakaina 1999; Maiwa 2011; Doromu-Koki 2017; Uare 2024.

²² Note: Many more wordlists and literacy materials were produced, however many are inaccessible.

Since this subgroup is the smallest with only two languages, it would be beneficial for Maria to have better representation.

- Three of the Dagan subgroup languages do not have adequate research:
 - **Mapena** (vigorous): three items, none of which have been since the 1970s research.
 - **Onjob** (threatened): four items, based on a 118-year old wordlist (Ray 1938); it is also noncontiguous to the other Dagan languages.
 - **Dima/Jimajima** (vigorous): six items, also based on the 118-year old wordlist (Ray 1938); one of the items is recent (Debouwa et al. 2009), however a vernacular text, so is of limited usefulness.²³ As these three languages represent one third of the Dagan languages, their added representation would be beneficial.
- One vigorous Mailuan language, **Morawa**, has five items. Like the previous Dagan languages, its research is based on the 118-year old wordlist (Ray 1938) and limited to the 1970s research. 80% of the remaining viable languages (one, Laua/Labu/Lauwa, is extinct) have adequate representation; the addition of this language would offer complete representation for the subgroup.
- The Koiarian subgroup has had abundant research, however one developing language, **Namiae**, is quite unrepresented in comparison. It has only one item, which while recent (Ewande et al. 2004), as a vernacular New Testament translation, by itself it is inadequate for linguistic research. As a member of the second largest subgroup in number of languages (with 88% representation), it would also offer complete representation for the subgroup.
- Three other Mailuan languages for which wordlists were produced, but are no longer available should also be included; they are **Domu**, **Bauwaki** and **Binahari**. They have all had sociolinguistic surveys, however the reports are very brief and do not provide any linguistic data; without the accompanying wordlists, they do not give any insights into the language. Since they are located in Central Province, it may be possible to locate speakers in Port Moresby.

As collection of this research has begun, it has become evident that further data should to be obtained from those languages without adequate research (cf. points above), so that this

²³ An SIL-PNG translation team has recently begun work in Dima, so linguistic research should be forthcoming.

comparative work can continue well. This may prove to be a difficult task, but one which would be very beneficial to the outcome of the ongoing research.

While data is marginally acceptable for several, nevertheless some kind of data was available for 84% (i.e. 32 of 38) of the languages, and 39% (i.e. 15 of 38) of the languages had more recent data (i.e. since the 1970s). As preliminary findings, investigation of the phonological analyses of these languages has yielded some observations:²⁴

1. The voiced plosives /b, d, g/ are very common (88%) while the voiceless plosives /p, t, k/ are somewhat less common (55%). Some languages do not have the full voiceless set; in those instances, they are usually lacking the bilabial /p/. A few also contain the glottal plosive /ʔ/, while some others have secondary articulations such as aspiration (Barai, Biage, Doromu-Koki, Ömie, Uare and Yareba), labialisation (Biage, Dima/Jimajima, Laua, Maiwa and Onjob) or preglottalisation (Uare). The majority of plosives are at three to four points of articulation, in agreement with Dutton's (1975c:622–623) observations (cf. §2.2.8 for this and subsequent points).
2. Languages vary in number of fricatives from zero to maybe six (Biage²⁵); the highest percentage (27%; Bariji, Binahari, Domu, Doromu-Koki, Maria, Morawa, Mulaha, Onjob and Yareba) have three, followed by four at 24% (Biangai, Fuyug, Humene, Koita, Kunimaipa, Laua, Ömie and Uare), two at 18% (Aneme Wake/Abia, Barai, Dima/Jimajima, Magi/Mailu, Moikodi and Mt. Koiali), one at 15% (Amam/Weri, Bauwaki, Kanasi, Maiwa and Tauade), zero (Daga and Umanakaina) or five (Ese and Koiari) both at 6% and six (Biage) at 3%. The most prevalent is the voiceless alveolar sibilant /s/, occurring in 85% of the languages; the least common is the voiceless alveo-palatal fricative /ç/, which is only found in the Uare language. Only three Koiarian languages have the voiceless bilabial fricative /ɸ/: Barai, Biage and Mt. Koiali.
3. The two nasals /m, n/ are indeed universal (100%); the velar nasal /ŋ/ is only found in three Goilalan languages (Amam/Weri, Biangai and Kunimaipa) and one Manubaran language (Maria).

²⁴ I am particularly indebted to Alex Hoffmann (2025) for his compilation of data from SIL-PNG-produced *Orthography and Phonology Description* papers. In this way I was able to relatively easily obtain data for 18 of the 38 Southeast Papuan languages. Other data was quite old and limited, particularly for the Mailuan family. Unfortunately, wordlists (such as Ray 1938), when they can be obtained, provide only an initial orthographic approximation at best. Also, some recently discovered (and cited) resources have yet to be physically obtained in order to be added to the analysis.

²⁵ (Hiley et al. 2015) data is phonetically based on a preliminary sociolinguistic survey.

4. As Dutton claims, it is most likely true that most of the languages have a tap/flap /ɾ/. However, since a fair amount of the data is based on orthographic representations in wordlists, it is impossible at this time to verify this claim.
5. While the lateral approximant /l/ is common, every subgroup has from one to three members which do not have it: Goilalan: Amam/Weri; Koiarian: Koita, Koiari and Ese; Kwalean: Humene and Uare; all of Manubaran: Doromu-Koki and Maria; Yareban: Moikodi and Aneme Wake/Abia; Mailuan: Bauwaki; Dagan: Dima/Jimajima. This means that only a full third of the languages (with currently available data) do have it.
6. Only 42% of the languages have two approximants (including 50% of the Goilalan languages and all but one of the Dagan languages), however 24% do not have any (including four Koiarian languages), 18% have only the labial-velar approximant /w/ (all Mailuan languages) and 12% have only the palatal approximant /j/ (including all the Manubaran languages). All of those having two have these same two that the other groups have (i.e. /w/ and /j/), except Kanasi, which has the labial-velar /w/, but instead of /j/, the velar /ɰ/.
7. The majority of languages have five cardinal vowels (i.e. 76% of the languages with data—there is a high chance the unattested languages have the same). Only in eight languages (Goilalan: Amam/Weri, Biangai and Kunimaipa; Koiarian: Barai, Biage, Ese/Mangalasi and Ömie; Manubaran: Maria) are more attested, the most being nine in Kunimaipa and Ömie. All attested members of the Kwalean, Yareban, Mailuan and Dagan subgroups have five vowels.
8. Many languages (55%) permit only open syllables. There are just three which permit complex codas of two consonants (two Goilalan: Amam/Weri and Fuyug; and one Dagan: Maiwa) and one with complex onsets of two consonants (also Dagan: Umanakaina). Many (64%) permit two vowel sequences and one (Koiarian: Ömie) includes three vowel sequences.

This is only the beginning; there is still more data to collect and then a comprehensive analysis will take time—look for future instalments.

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²⁶ Cf. ISO codes at end of each entry in column 4 of Table 1 to reference specific language name(s) relevant to each entry.

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