# Japanese and English Within Palauan

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## 1. Introduction

After decades of linguistic influence from Spanish, German, Japanese, and English, modern-day Palauan contains syntactic, semantic, and phonological references to all four languages. The sociolinguistic situation of Palau seems typical to that of many post-colonial nations: a once-administrative language is now an official high language, while the historically indigenous language is a low language. In Palau, however, within a 50-year span, one official high language, Japanese, has been completely replaced by another, English. Palauans born in or before the World War II generation are Japanese-Palauan bilinguals, but since the post-1946 era of American occupation, Japanese fluency and competency has rapidly diminished. Many middle aged Palauans are semi-competent Japanese speakers, while younger Palauans are mainly English-Palauan bilinguals, and formal L2 Japanese learners. Linguistic remnants of the Japanese period remain however, and there is heavy lexical borrowing from Japanese into the Palauan of all speakers. However, English has, for the most part, replaced Japanese as the official language of Palau, and as the language of formal institutions like law and education. The purpose of this paper is to assess the linguistic interplay of Japanese, English, and Palauan within the island of Palau, and present the lexical, semantic, morphological, phonological, and syntactic effects of the two non-indigenous majority languages on Palauan. The proposal is a historical study of rapid language change and contact, and hopes to present a simple but thorough account of major contact-induced theories about Palauan, such as the status of Palauan word order and non-native phonological innovation.[1] The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents a concise history of linguistic contact in Palau. Section 3 presents the issue of Palauan underlying word order. Section 4 discusses Palauan phonological innovation. In Section 5, the semantic modification of borrowings into

[1] This paper is the result of many months of research and analysis, and I couldn't have completed it without the help and support of many people. First and foremost, there are not enough words in the Palauan language to describe my gratitude to Dianne Jonas for being my advisor, my mentor, and my friend. Thanks to Laurence Horn, for his astute comments during my presentations, and for unwittingly inspiring this paper during last year's Pragmatics seminar. A special thanks to the LING 491 gang, who are the best set of comrades a rambling linguist could ask for. An earlier version of this paper was presented in February 2003 at the Jonathan Edwards Paskus Mellon Forum, and I am grateful to the senior audience for their questions and suggestions. I am also extremely grateful to Miyuki Yakashiro for her assistance with all native Japanese intuitions. Thanks also to Richard Horn at Yale's Social Science Library, the Cornell University Library system, the Harvard University Library system, Thomas J. Welling in Vancouver, Coca-Cola®, and as always, Mum and Dad. Any and all errors are my full responsibility.

Palauan is analyzed. Section 6 presents evidence of the linguistic influence of Spanish and German on Palauan. The Palauan vocalic system is discussed in Section 7, the consonantal system in Section 8, and morphology in Section 9. In Section 10, the paper is summarized. There are two appendices.

## 2. A History of Palauan Language Contact

Within the last two centuries the Palau Islands of the Western Carolines have been culturally, financially, and linguistically influenced by four different foreign administrations. Spain annexed the Carolines in 1686, and Spanish language and Catholicism trickled into region for more than 200 years. During the fiscal crisis caused by the Spanish-American war, Spain sold Palau to Germany in 1899. The German administration of the islands lasted until 1918, when Germany was forced to cede most of its colonial possessions after World War I. Soon after, the League of Nations granted control of Palau to Japan, and Japan would retain the islands for the next 30 years, despite withdrawing from the League in 1935. Japan continued to develop Palau militarily, culturally, and economically until the country's defeat in World War II. In 1947, the United States was given mandate over Palau, and treated the islands as martial and administrative bases until 1995, when the country was granted independence as the Republic of Palau.

According to the 2000 Palauan census, the total population of the islands of Palau was then 18, 322 people. [2] Besides Palauan, a Western Austronesian language, a number of other languages are spoken in Palau, but these minority languages are increasingly endangered and maintain limited amounts of native speakers. The 2000 census records less than 600 combined speakers of various native Chuukic languages, including Fanah, and Pulo Hatoh. Unlike Palauan, these languages are Micronesian, and are closely related to the languages spoken on other islands of the Carolines. The number of Chuukic speakers and Micronesian languages in Palau has declined steadily over several decades, as the languages and population of Palau become increasingly centralized on the main island, Baldeboab, and in the capital city, Koror. The official status of the two major

[2] Palau. Bureau of the Census. The Palau 2000 Population Census.
<www.palaugov.net/stats/Economic/GDDS_docs/Palau_SOCb_Popn.pdf>

foreign languages in Palau – first Japanese and later English - helped to hasten the decline of the non-Palauan languages. Today, descendents of Chuukic speakers are often fully integrated into the general Palauan population, and like the general population, acquire Palauan natively and English as their first and most important L2 language. Thus, the Chuukic languages of Palau are incredibly endangered, and quite a few have already died out completely. A 1975 linguistic study of the Caroline Islands documented less than 50 speakers of the Micronesian language Pulo Annian on Palau, while the last fluent speaker of the now extinct Palauan Meril died in 1992.[3]

From the early part of the twentieth century until the end of World War II, most of Micronesia was under Japanese rule. Japanese was used as a *lingua franca* throughout the occupied islands, and while some of its influence is still evident today, the official cultural and linguistic status of the Japanese language has been all but eradicated. English and Palauan now occupy realms once dominated by Japanese, such as government, education, and enterprise. Recently gathered linguistic and ethnographic data indicate that the number of monolingual Japanese in Palau has fallen to below 500.[4] It has been suggested that if Japan had continued to rule Micronesia, "Japanese would certainly have become the sole language in the region, and the majority of indigenous languages would have disappeared and died with amazing rapidity."(Wurm, Mühlhäusler, and Tryon 1996: 986). While Japanese did provide Palau and the rest of Micronesia with the first major common language for inter-island communication, the language and its subsequent pidgins have relinquished this role within a span of one or two generations. Once the majority language, Japanese in Palau has been made endangered partly through the introduction of a new majority language, English, and through a reappraisal of the indigenous language, Palauan.

The popularity and functionality of Japanese in Palau decreased within a matter of years as the language lost speakers, domains, and status to English and Palauan. While both English and Palauan flourish as languages of official and cultural prominence, the Palauan Japanese community has undergone a sharp decline, and is itself in the stages of second-language obsolescence. Within Palau and Micronesia, English is by far the most

[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*

prominent current *lingua franca*, and on a global scale, the language has no serious competitor for that position. While maintaining cultural and genealogical ties to Palauan, the rapid decline and demise of Japanese as the high language of Palau is evident in the adaptation of lexical items and certain phonological and syntactic values of an English-centric linguistic community. Extended contact can occur and flourish despite the inherent linguistic differences within the Sino-Asiatic language, Japanese, the Indo-European language, English, and the Austronesian language, Palauan.

Language contact, essentially, is the structured use of more than one language in the same place at the same time. The use of English outside traditionally English-speaking cultures is perhaps the most prominent example of language contact today. Through media, business, communications, education and religion, millions of non-native English speakers encounter the language frequently. In such cultures, the interaction between English and the native language is often unequivocal. In Palau, almost all of the adults who speak Palauan speak either English or Japanese fluently, but the reverse is certainly not true. Such asymmetrical bilingualism is especially common when, as with Palauan, the linguistic status of the country is shifting between languages, or as the speakers of a subordinate bilingual group gravitate towards the language of a dominant monolingual group. For the past few decades, Palauan bilingualism has been transitional, as Palauan-Japanese loses dominance and speakers, while Palauan-English becomes prevalent in government, education, and international communication.

There was a vast difference in the degree of daily and cultural interaction between Japanese and Palauans and Americans and Palauans. Palau's proximity to Japan and agricultural labor policies encouraged an influx of Japanese immigrants to Palau, while American immigration to Palau during that country's administration of the islands was virtually nil. According to a 1940 Palauan census, Japanese immigrants outnumbered native Palauans in a four to one ratio.[5] The majority of these Japanese immigrants were lower class laborers: farmers and fisherman recruited to Palau as part of Japan's major island agricultural force. These immigrants, along with native Palauans comprised the base of Japan's agricultural enterprises in Palau. In contrast with the Japanese

[5] Palau. Bureau of the Census. The Palau 1940 Population Census. <www.palaugov.net/stats/Economic/GDDS_docs/Palau_SOCb_Popn.pdf>

immigrants, who ingratiated themselves professionally and culturally into Palauan society, the small number of Americans stationed in Palau remained outside the register of everyday Palauan society, and were mostly military and administrative personnel, missionaries, and school teachers.

Today, the official languages of Palau are Palauan and English, and most Palauans born during or after the American occupation period are competent speakers of both. However, Palauan and English are not of equal stature in the country, and in varying domains and registers one language has prominence over the other. Palauan Constitutional Law of 1979 states that in all "matters of judicial, administrative, and governmental importance, English has precedence and shall be the language of communication".[6] English is the main language of government and law, and while all official documents and reports must be written in English, there is no requirement that they be written in Palauan as well, though most documents are. English is also the predominant language of business and finance in Palau, especially on an international level, and the language of higher education, as the modern Palauan school system was patterned after the American one. Not until fairly recently has an emphasis been placed on the formal teaching and incorporation of school subjects in Palauan, and today many elementary and secondary schools offer classes taught in Palauan and with Palauan literature. The current generation is experiencing the linguistic fruits of an earlier nationalist movement that resulted in Palau's independence from the United States in the mid-1990s. Japanese, once the language of education, government, and business, no longer holds official status in Palau, but is often taught in schools as a foreign language.

Like most of the islands of the Carolines and Micronesia, Palau is a historically oral society. No Palauan orthography, writing system, or literature predates the era of European colonization. Literacy was introduced to Palau by the colonial powers for religious and educational purposes, but the subsequent development of an official orthographic system has been controversial and unstable. During the Japanese period, the Palauan orthography was a series of phonograms derived from Japanese *kana* syllabaries.[7] During the American occupation, however, the Japanese *kana* system was

[6] Palau. Office of the Judiciary. An Abstract of Palauan Constitutional Law. Koror: POJ, 1979.
[7] See Appendix 1 for the Japanese representation of Palauan phonology.

discouraged, and the Roman alphabet was used to create a new Palauan orthography. The transition from Japanese administration to American administration fostered the creation of dual, competing writing systems for Palauan. The syllabary-based orthography was discontinued during the American era, and today many older, Japanese-influenced Palauans are illiterate or semi-literate in Palauan due to the replacement of the *kana* orthography with the Roman alphabet.

Despite the decades of cultural, political, and social contact, Japanese linguistic competence has rapidly diminished since 1945, and there is a subsequent feeling of language obsolescence, and possibly even death, of Palauan Japanese. The dissolution of a fluent and continuous Japanese speech community was hastened with the advent of the post-World War II era of American colonization. Almost immediately, American English replaced Japanese as the language of official communication, and Japanese was removed from educational, judicial, and administrative domains. Socially and ethnically, though, English and American culture had a much smaller effect on the Palauan population, and for competent speakers educated during the period of Japanese administation, Japanese remained a language of home and family

There are then three major levels of languaage spoken on Palau: Palauan, the native language, English, the majority language, and Japanese, the minority language. For the multilingual citizens of these islands, choice of and affiliation to a language are markers of an ethnic and cultural identity as well as a linguistic one. When asked to define themselves ethnically, the overwhelming majority of respondents rated themselves as 'Palauan' or 'Palauan-Japanese', even if their competence and knowledge of the Japanese language was minimal or non-existent. Despite the prevalence and status of English on Palau, less than 2% of the people surveyed identified themselves as 'Palauan-American'.[8] The linguistic dominance of American English does not extend to cultural or ethnic registers, even though English is the main language of social communication in Palau.

Older Palauans who grew up during the Japanese era were educated exclusively in Japanese, while subsequent generations were taught solely in English, or eventually, in

[8] Palau. Bureau of the Census. The Palau 2000 Population Census. <www.palaugov.net/stats/Economic/GDDS_docs/Palau_SOCb_Popn.pdf>

both English and Palauan. Elderly Palauans have the strongest linguistic ties to Japanese, while younger Palauans tend to show the most competence in English, but an affinity for Palauan supercedes them both. Almost all Palauans have both oral and written competence in Palauan. There are many (typically elderly) Palauan-Japanese bilinguals and many more Palauan-English bilinguals, but there are very few Palauan-English-Japanese trilinguals, Japanese-English bilinguals, or Palauan/English/Japanese monolinguals in the country.

The influence of four different non-indigenous languages within an 150-year period has had an undeniable impact on the language structure of Palauan. The majority of lexical borrowings represent concepts and tangible items unfamiliar to Palauan culture and history. Many borrowed items are subjected to the complex derivational and inflectional processes of Palauan noun and verb morphology. Like native Palauan lexical items, borrowings from English and Japanese are subject to most, but not all, of the characteristic syntactic constructions and idiomatic Palauan phrase structure.

## 3. Palauan Word Order Analysis

The status of underlying word order has been an important issue in Palauan linguistics, and special consideration is taken to fully formulate the role and place of the subject. Both McManus' and Josephs' early formal analyses of Palauan posited the language's realized and underlying word order as SVO, as in English. Unlike certain morphological and phonological issues, subjecthood and objecthood are not limited by humanity or animacy constraints in Palauan.

(1) A[9] ngalęk a męnga a ngikęl.

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[9] *a* in Palauan serves many purposes. Frequently, it translates to the conditional particle 'if'.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | lengar | er | ngii | a | udedek, | e | ak | mo | er | a | Guam. |
| If | havePAST | P | 3rdSG | | money | then | I | AUX | P | | Guam |

'If I had money, then I would go to Guam.'

As a standalone particle, it precedes most NPs (with the exception of pronouns) and VPs: Josephs (1977) defines it as 'a contentless word which precedes nouns and verbs under various constructions'. In conjunction with the relational preposition *er*, *a* forms the definite article.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A ngelekek | a | medakt | er | a | derumk |
| child-1stSG | | fear | P | | thunder |

'My child is afraid of the [specific] thunder'.

(Josephs 1975)

When functioning as the basic nominal or verbal indicator, convention leaves *a* unglossed.

child eat fish

'The child is eating fish.'

(2) A malk a killii a bęras.
chicken eatPAST rice
'The chicken ate the rice.'

(Josephs 1975)

(3) A Droteo a mla mei.
Droteo AUX come
'Droteo has come'

(Campana 2001)

Subject-initial order is also present in sentences that lack overt objects, such as phrases with intransitive verbs, stative verbal-adjectives, and copulaless descriptive sentences.

(4) A ngęlekek a ręmurt.
child1$^{st}$SG run
'My child is running'.

(5) A Droteo a ochechur.
Droteo laugh
'Droteo laughs.'

(Josephs 1975)

(6) A ralm a mekelekolt
water be cold
'The water is cold'.

(Georgopoulos 1991)

(7) A sęchęlik a chad ęr a Siabal.
friend1$^{st}$SG person P Japan.
'My friend is Japanese.'

(Josephs 1977)

This SVO analysis was challenged in 1985, and later in 1991, by Carol Georgopoulos' work on Palauan resumptive binding and pronominal structure.

Underlying SVO word order failed to account for certain phenomena of relativization, passivization, and morphological structure, and Georgopoulos presented a VOS analysis of Palauan akin to that of another Western Austronesian language, Malagasy.

In Palauan, VOS is a viable and productive word order, and (8) and (9) are grammatical VOS equivalents of sentences (3) and (6), previously analyzed as SVO.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (8) | Ng | mla | mei | a | Droteo. |
| | 3rdSG | AUX | come | | Droteo |
| | 'Droteo has come.' | | | | |
| (9) | Ng | mekelekolt | | a | ralm. |
| | 3rdSG | be cold | | | water |
| | 'The water is cold.' | | | | |

(Georgopoulos 1991)

In Josephs' SVO analysis, the sentences in (3) and (6) are the realizations of standard Palauan production. The VOS sentences in (8) and (9) are derived through a rightward emphatic subject shifting, which moves the subject noun to phrase-final position. An overt pronominal trace that matches the subject in person and number occupies phrase-initial position after the movement of the noun. As with all non-emphatic pronouns, the pronominal trace *ng* is not preceded by *a.* The SVO and VOS productions of the corresponding sentences have slightly different readings, and VOS extraposition is produced for emphatic purpose to focus semantic weight on the verb. (3) would best answer the question *Ng techa a mla mei?,* 'Who has come?', while (8) would best answer *Ngarang a Droteo rirellii?*, 'What did Droteo do?'. SVO word order is also believed to be used when expressing novel or contradictory information, while the use of VOS order indicates confirmation of an expected event.

Josephs' extraposition analysis does not account for the absence of certain expected phenomena, such as the distribution of *a.* Pre-verbal marker *a* is not present in the VOS sentences, and the pronominal trace *ng* occurs in the position usually occupied by *a.* While Josephs posits that sentences both transitive and intransitive can undergo optional subject shifting, all of the examples presented consist of intransitive verbs or the class of obligatorily possessed verbal noun phrases with zero copula. No evidence is given of optional extraposition with a transitive verb.

(10) A biang a soak.
beer liking.1stSG
'My liking is beer./ Beer is what I like'

(11) Ng soak a biang.
3rdSG liking 1stSG beer.
'I like beer.

(12) A rrom a chętil.
rum hatred 3rdSG
'His hatred is liquor / Liquor is what he hates.'

(13) Ng chętil a rrom.
3rdSG hatred 3rdSG rum
'He hates liquor.'

(Josephs 1975)

The SVO sentences of (10) and (12) are grammatical in Palauan, but are awkward and highly stylized according to native speaker intuitions. The VOS equivalents (11) and (13) are produced far more often.

Also, embedded and relativized clauses in Palauan are always VOS, regardless of the word order of the matrix clause.

(14) Ngomdasu el kuno ngmo me'ar er a bilis a ngelekel a se'elik.
think3rdSG COMP FUTAUX buy P boat son3rdSG friend1stSG
'He thinks that my friend's son will buy the boat.'

(Georgopoulos 1991)

Josephs' general analysis of emphatic shifting also potentially and problematically overgenerates VSO, an unacceptable word order in Palauan.

(15) */ Ng męnga a ngalęk a ngikęl.

This corollary to (1) can not mean 'The child ate the fish', with the subject *ngalęk* immediately following the verb *menga*. Such a sentence can only have a VOS reading, and translate to 'The fish ate the child'. SOV, attested Japanese word order, is assuredly unacceptable in Palauan.

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In Georgopoulos' VOS analysis, features of mood, aspect, and tense are defined under the main category of INFL, rather than having each feature require a unique projection. In sentences like

(16) Ng mla mei a Droteo.
3rdSg AUX come Droteo
'Droteo has come.'

(Georgopoulos 1991)

the subject *Droteo* is base generated at the rightmost end of the clause, and *Droteo* is the specifier of the INFL category.

Palauan also has a series of idiomatic and literary constructions that require obligatory VOS structure, as an SVO ordering of these phrases would obfuscate the metaphoric meanings of the sentences and render them literal, and perhaps ungrammatical. The following examples involve the obligatorily possessed noun *reng,* 'heart, soul, spirit' in frozen VOS order.

(17) Ngungil a renguk.
3rdSG be good heart1stSG
'I'm happy.'

(18) Ngklou a rengul.
3rdSG big heart3rdSG
'He's calm.'

(Georgopoulos 1991)

Analogous SVO renderings of (17) and (18) lose the idiomatic underpinnings and are interpreted literally.

(19) ?/* A renguk a ungil.
'My heart is happy.'

(20) ?/* A rengul a klou .
'His heart is calm.'

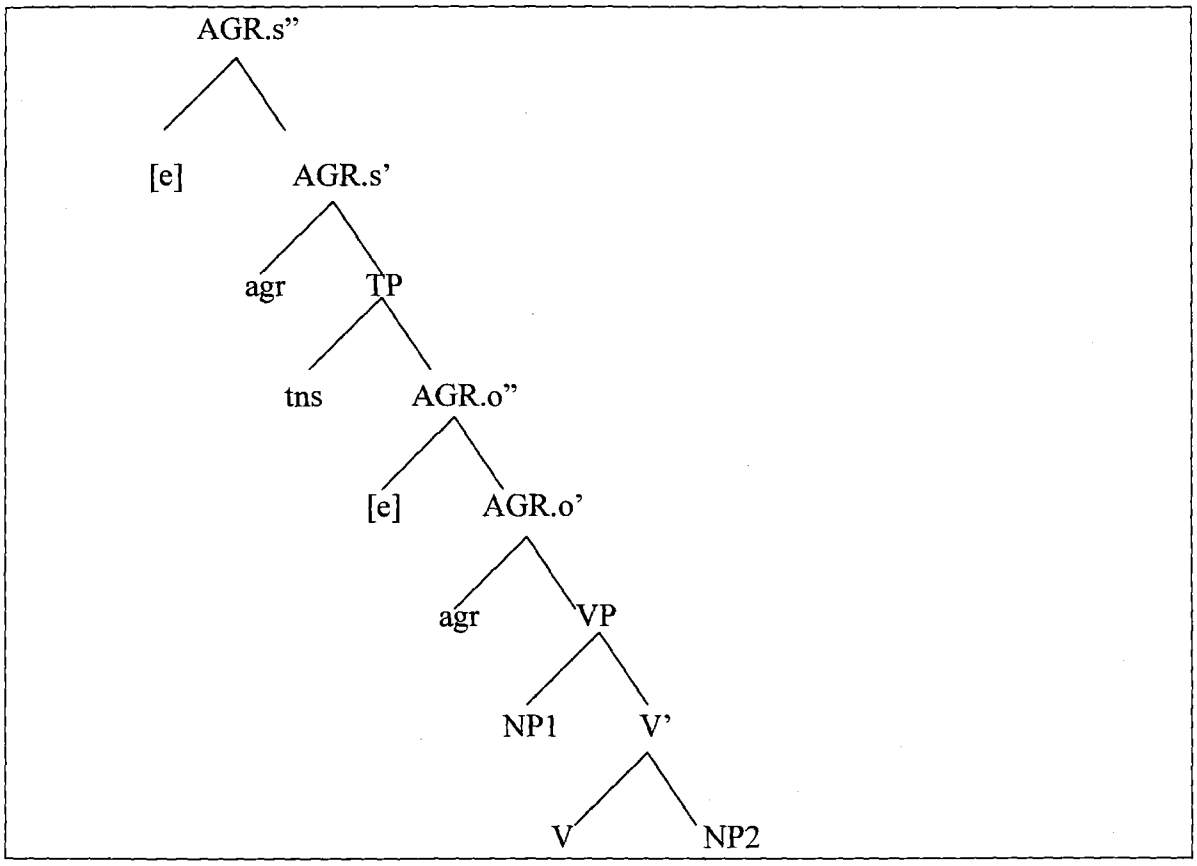
(Georgopoulos 1991)

Georgopoulos, working from a word ordering analysis presented in Waters (1979) argues that the Palauan grammar is VOS. The various shifting and movement rules

posited by Josephs to account for VOS order are explained by a topicalization rule governing an underlyingly VOS structure. In addition, embedded clauses and certain idiomatic and obligatorily possessed structures require VOS, whereas no class of Palauan phrases is frozen in SVO.

Campana (2000) argues that Palauan, as Josephs posited, is indeed SVO, and Georgopoulos' VOS account is hampered by the wide and encompassing scope of her INFL projection. Chomsky (1991) proposed a standard phrase structure that accounts for an inflectional morphology attached to verbs through a series of syntactic phrasal categories and head movements

(21)




(Chomsky 1991)

With the expansion of the INFL category to include agreement (AGR), tense (TP), and aspect (ASP) as separate projections, the clause-final subject as the specifier of

the large category INFL is inadequate in the presence of these new categories, and the NP is forced to bound through the expanded specifier positions to account for its location.

A VOS account is also hindered if Palauan is a pronominal argument language, as defined by Jelinek (1984). In pronominal argument languages with rich agreement patterns, theta roles are assigned VP internally. If Palauan is indeed a pronominal agreement language, clause-final subjects are products of an appositional argument structure. The clause-initial pronoun is then not a pronominal trace, but an argument morpheme occupying a specifier position as a result of NP doubling. Taking the expanded INFL structure into account, Palauan is most likely underlyingly SVO, despite the prominence and frequency of VOS extraposition.

## 4. Palauan Phonological Adaptations

The influx of several foreign languages and their varying phonological systems has had little effect on native Palauan phonology and phonotactics. Palauan phonology predicates an orthographic and phonological change in many lexical borrowings from both English and Japanese. Palauan onset and internal phonological structure is unlike that of either languages, and for the most part, borrowings are adapted to Palauan structure, rather than having the language incorporate new and unfamiliar innovations. However, phonemes unfamiliar to Palauan have been introduced historically, and have become fully integrated into the Palauan language due to their presence in incorporated borrowings.

As most lexical borrowings represent cultural or social items unfamiliar to Palau, the majority of these loanwords come into the language without significant semantic change.

(22) *baeb* [baɛp] 'pipe' *bengngos* [bɛŋnos] lawyer (Jp.*bengoshi*)[10]

*tibi* [tibi] 'TV' *nappa* [napa] *Nappa* 'Japanese cabbage'

[10] All Japanese is transliterated as the romanized adaptation of the *Shinkunreishiki* (New Official System), and adheres to the standards designated as 'JSL Romanization' by Jorden and Noda (1987).

In each of the above examples, the loanwords from Japanese and English retain their original meanings exactly in Palauan. The borrowings undergo a predictable phonological restructuring in order to accommodate the Palauan system, which lacks the voiced labiodental fricative [v] found in the English *TV* or the voiceless alveolar fricative [ʃ] in *bengoshi.* The two unfamiliar phonemes are realized as their closest Palauan equivalents, voiced bilabial stop [b] and alveolar fricative [s] respectively.

*Nappa* is an interesting example of a word borrowed wholesale into Palauan, without adhering to the orthographic and phonological standards of the language. English *pipe,* rendered as Palauan *baeb*, contains phonemes in places outside of their normal Palauan distribution, and is spelled with a *p*, a letter not normally found in Palauan orthography. To reconcile these differences between English and Palauan spelling and pronunciation, several changes are made. The voiceless bilabial stop [p] is not a viable word-initial phoneme in Palau, but the voiced counterpart [b] is. [p] is a permissible word-final phoneme, but [p] and the more common [b] are in complementary distribution, and [p] is recognized as an allophone of /b/. Palauan [p] in all environments is usually orthographically rendered as [b], so although *pipe* and *baeb* are semantically identical, there are language-specific differences phonologically and orthographically.

*Nappa*, however, retains its Japanese pronunciation and spelling despite the constraints of Palauan. Both [n] and [p] are found in environments outside of their normal Palauan distribution. Orthographically, *ng* represents [n] and [ŋ], two allophones of /ŋ/. The alveolar nasal [n] is not found word-initially or prevocallically in native Palaun words: those environments are occupied by [ŋ], which occurs everywhere except before /d/, /t/, /s/, and /r/.

(23) *ngau* [ŋaw] 'fire' *reng* [rɛŋ] 'heart, soul'

*ngklem* [ŋklɛm] 'your name' *ng chetik* [ŋʔətikʰ] 'I hate it.'

The exceptions to this distribution of /n/ are in the phonology of words borrowed from English and Japanese. In most borrowings, [n], not [ŋ], is the unmarked phoneme, and [n] occurs in environments where [ŋ] would normally be found.[11]

(24) *nas* [nas] 'eggplant' (Jp. *nasu*)

*niziu* [nijuw] 'twenty' (when counting currency) (Jp. *nijyuu*)

*Dan* [dan] Proper name

In this respect, *nappa* follows the pattern of all borrowings in retaining [n] in environments where Palauan permits [ŋ][12]. However, *nappa* is allowed to retain [p], in an environment where Palauan grammar normally forces a change into [b], both phonologically and orthographically. It appears then that a certain class of borrowings, either through semantic inference, like brand names, or through deep incorporation into the Palauan language, are able to resist certain Palauan phonological constraints. Non-native proper nouns borrowed from the earlier Spanish and German eras, such as *Patro, Pacia,* and *Frederik* also resist adherence to Palauan phonological and orthographic rules.

Palauan phonological and orthographical constraints can create homonyms from loanwords that vary in spelling and pronunciation in their original languages. The

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[11] Through assimilation, [ŋ] is still realized before all velars, even in loanwords.

*bangk* [baŋk] 'bank'; *tangk* [taŋk] 'aquarium'

[12] Phonemic /n/ is not present in native Palauan vocabulary, as the result of an early sound-change in which Proto Austronesian /*n/ became /l/ in most positions. The resulting resistance to [n] was productive through German times, and often non-indigenous [n] was realized as Palauan [l]: Sp. *cajon*; Pal. *kahol* 'coffin'; Gm. *Maschine*; Pal. *mesil* 'machine'.

Japanese nominal *panku* is modified to fit Palauan phonology: [p] appears [b] word initially, [n] to [ŋ] before velars, and final high vowel deletion (a common occurrence in standard Japanese speech) to derive Palauan *bangk*. The English pronunciation of 'bank (financial institution)' fits into established standards of Palauan phonology, and is realized as the noun *bangk*. Two different words borrowed from different languages produce identical outputs in Palauan.

## 5. Semantic Renderings of Loanwords

Often, semantic modification of loanwords is forced not out of competition with native words, but out of competition from words borrowed from other languages. As English is chronologically the last language entering Palauan, the meanings of English loanwords are often altered due to the presence of words borrowed earlier in Palauan history.

(25) *bando* (Jp. *bando*) 'belt, sash'

*bert* (Eng. belt) 'fan belt' (of a car)

The later English borrowing, *bert*, is narrowed to a specific register due to the presence of the earlier borrowing of *bando*, which is itself a Japanese borrowing from English.

Many words borrowed into the language retain meanings and senses similar to those of their English or Japanese counterparts, but are realized in Palauan under a different lexical class. In Japanese, forms of the light verb *suru* can be adjoined to nominals in order to indicate the act of making, doing, or acting upon the NP.

(26) *panku* n. 'puncture' + *suru* v. 'do,make' = *panku suru* v. 'to puncture'

*benkyoo* n. 'studies' + *suru* = *benkyoo suru* v. 'to study'

The nominal + *suru* construction is an extremely common way of deriving both transitive and intransitive verbs in Japanese.

When Palau borrows Japanese constructions with nominals and light verbs, however, the semantic meaning of the transitive or intransitive verb remains, but *suru* is dropped. The effects of the light verb are present in the semantic meaning and syntactic category of the loanword, but are not phonologically realized.

(27) *bangk* v.t 'to puncture' Jp. *panku* n. 'puncture'

*benkio* v.t 'to study' Jp. *benkyoo* n. 'studies'

In (27), Palauan transitive verbs are derived in some part from Japanese nominals.

(28) *basket* n. (Eng. 'basketball') *oubasket* v.i. 'play basketball'

*tabi* n. (Jp.*tabi*, 'canvas shoes') *outabi* v.i. 'wear canvas shoes'

Like the Japanese light verb *suru,* Palauan has a morphological verbal prefix *ou-* which, when affixed to a nominal, indicates some type of interaction with the adjoined NP. *Ou*-N is usually then translated as 'to do N', 'to make N', 'to play N', much like the Japanese construction N-*suru.* The examples in (28) present nominals borrowed into Palauan as nouns, which can undergo a native Palauan morphological process to produce intransitive and stative verbal equivalents. In Japanese, *tabi* does not under go the same process of light verb affixation that *benkyoo* and *panku* do. There is a lexical verb, *hakimasu,* that means 'to wear on the feet or legs', and the most basic interaction with *tabi* is considered an argument of this verb.

(29) *Watashi wa atarashii tabi o hakite iru.*

I TOP new shoes OBJ wear PROG

'I am wearing new canvas shoes.'

Adjoining the light verb to *tabi* in an attempt to produce 'to wear shoes' is ungrammatical.

(30) * *Watashi wa atarashii tabi o suru.*

In such situations where the syntax of the original language does not produce predictable morphological verbalization, the process is handled within the constraints of Palauan itself. Nominals that do not come into the language with readily available verbal equivalents are subject to the same verbalization process that native Palauan nouns undergo.

(31) *lkou* 'hat' *oulkou* 'wear a hat'

*sekool* (a game of chance) *ousekool* 'play sekool'

Conversely, nominals borrowed into the language with verbal readings can not participate in the native Palauan verbalization process, rendering the forms **oubangk* and **oubenkio*. ungrammatical.

**5.1 Semantic Modification of Borrowings**

Many borrowings from English and Japanese show significant semantic modification, far outside scope of the loanword's original meaning.

(32) *baterflai* (Eng. 'butterfly') a flaky person

*bangikoi* butterfly

*tamanengi* (Jp. *tamanegi* 'onion bulb') to be bald[13]

*bangk* (Jp. *panku suru* 'to puncture') to give birth

In (32), *baterflai*, is a prime example of the semantic modification of a loanword, most likely due to competition with a native word.[14] Palauan has a word for the animal butterfly, *bangikoi*, and thus borrowing the English noun and retaining its semantic meaning was superfluous. Like many loanwords, 'butterfly' was accepted into Palauan despite the existence of a native equivalent, and was adopted with a specialized register different from the original English meaning. Like the Palauan translation of *baterflai,* there is a common English idiomatic use of the noun, in phrases such as 'social butterfly'. *baterflai*, however, can never refer to the insect.

*Tamanengi* is a direct borrowing of the Japanese nominal compound *tama-negi,* or 'round onion', and it is used as a noun in Palauan. There is no evidence of a native Palauan word for 'onion', but words for onion have been borrowed into the language from two colonial sources: *tamanegi*, from Japanese, and *sebolias,* 'green onions' from the Spanish *cebollas.*

(33) Ngulechar a tamanengi.

3rdSGbuyPAST onions

'S/he bought onions.'

---

[13] There are quite a few terms in Palauan to connote the shaving of a head, including native terms *ketebiob*, Japanese borrowings *tamanegi* and *bozu* (Jp. *boozu,* 'monk'), and English borrowings *boruu* (Eng. 'bowl') and *koziak* n. (Eng. 'Kojak').

[14] There are, however, a few examples of borrowings coming into competition with native Palauan words, and systematically replacing them. The English borrowing *katuu* 'cat', is considered more acceptable in Palauan than the native word, *ngaliar. Ngaliar* is restricted mostly to literary and idiomatic registers. *Ngillebedii a katuu a bulik.* 'The boy hit the cat'; *A ngaliar a omult a cherel.* 'The cat turns his tongue; Something's wrong.'

However, *tamanengi*, can also be used as a descriptive stative verb meaning 'to be bald; to have a shaved head', a semantic connotation not found in the original Japanese.

(34) A Droteo a mlo tamanengi.

Droteo AUX PAST be bald

'Droteo has become bald'

*bangk*, as seen in (32) was modified semantically in a similar way. The term was borrowed into Palauan with its original Japanese meaning 'to puncture', but has adopted a derived connotation of 'giving birth' that the word does not have in Japanese.

## 6. The Linguistic Influence of Spanish and German

Lexically, semantically, and syntactically, the influence of Spanish and German on Palauan has been minimal. Spain had colonial jurisdiction over Palau beginning in the late 17th century, but governed the islands infrequently and haphazardly until the end of 19th century. Spanish rule was characterized by the spread of Christianity to the Carolines region, and the lasting lexical evidence of the Spanish occupation is the large number of religious and Catholic terms borrowed during this era.

(35) *baskua* (Sp. *Paskua)* 'Easter'

*bostol* (Sp. *apostol*) 'apostle'

*ikelesia* (Sp. *iglesia*) (Catholic) 'church'

In 1899, Spain sold Palau and many other Caroline possessions to Germany. Although Germany valued Palau as a strategic military site, centrally located between Asia and North America, the lasting lexical evidence of the 20-year German era has also been a number of religious terms. The German occupation brought Protestantism to

Palau, and a dual system of Spanish- and German-derived religious terms is available in the language, depending upon whether the reference is Catholic or Protestant.

(36)

| | |
|---|---|
| *Kristo* (Sp. *Christo)* | (Catholic) Christ |
| *Kristus* (Gm. *Christus)* | (Protestant) Christ |
| *Hesus* (Sp. *Jesus)* | (Catholic) Jesus |
| *Iesus* (Gm. *Jesus)* | (Protestant) Jesus |
| *ikelesia* (Sp. *iglesia*) | (Catholic) church |
| *kirk* (Gm. *kirche*) | (Protestant) church |

Of the four foreign languages to infiltrate Palau, German has had the weakest linguistic impact on the native language. The nature and the relatively brief time span of the German occupation probably hampered prolonged linguistic contact. Palauan borrowed lexical items from German, but there is no evidence of any syntactic or phonological borrowings.

## 7. The Palauan Vocalic System

Orthographically, the standard Palauan alphabet contains ten consonants [*b, t, d, k, ch, s, m, ng, l,* and *r*] and five vowels [*a, e, i, o, u*], but phonologically the system shows much wider variation. Like Palauan, Japanese has a basic system of five vowels, a common structure that predicates minimal vowel modification when borrowing Japanese lexical items into Palauan.

Palauan *i* is [i], a high front vowel, in all individual environments, while *u* is the high back [u] everywhere:

(37) *sils* [sils] 'sun'

*bulis* [bulis] Eng. 'police'

*chimi* [ʔimi] Jp. *imi* 'meaning'

*dub* [dup] 'dynamite'

*bung* [bung] Jp. *pun,* 'minute'

In standard Japanese speech, the high vowels [u] and [i] are typically deleted in two specific environments: word finally following a voiceless consonant, and between two voiceless consonants. These vowels are deleted in these environments when loanwords from Japanese are borrowed into Palauan, and the omission is often represented in the orthography as well as in the phonology.

(38) Jp. *kuse* 'habit, mannerism' P. *kse* [ksɛ]

Jp. *rekishi* 'history' P. *reksi* [rɛksi]

[u] and [i] in Japanese loanwords are also occasionally deleted word-finally, as happens in the original language.

(39) Jp. *taoru* 'towel' P. *taor*

Jp. *daijoobu* 'OK' P. *daiziob*

Jp. *doku* 'poison' P. *dok*

Jp. *bengoshi* 'lawyer' P. *bengngos*

An earlier stage of the Palauan orthography had *y* and *w* substituted for /i/ and /u/, but that predilection has fallen out of favor, in an attempt to attune the Palauan writing system more closely to that of English.

Palauan *e* can be either [ɛ] or [ə]. With the presence of [ə], Palauan has a reduced vowel that English has, but Japanese does not. As with English, [ə] has a fairly limited distribution, and occurs only in unstressed syllables. Palauan does not permit secondary stress, and in every multisyllabic word, there is one and only one stressed syllable.

(40) *chelat* [ʔəlat$^{h}$] 'smoked fish'

*chasbering* [ʔasbɛriŋ] 'aspirin'

Many native Palauan words that end in a geminate or other consonant cluster phonetically add [ə] word-finally, a convention that does not extend to the orthographic representation of the word. The addition of [ə] frequently occurs with monosyllabic words requiring a primary stress focus. :

(41) *kall* [kal:ə] 'food'

*ralm* [ralmə] 'water'

*eolt* [joltə] 'wind'

### 7.1 Vowel Length

With the exception of /a/, all of the Palauan vowels can occur with long variants. Orthographically, a long vowel is doubled: *ee, ii, oo, uu.* Phonologically, these vowels differ from their short counterparts in length and articulation.

(42) *ngii* [ngij] 'he, she, it'

*dekool* [dəgowl] 'cigarette'

*kmeed* [kmɛjt$^{h}$] 'near'

*luut* [luwt$^{h}$] 'return'

All Palauan long vowels produce either /j/ or /w/ gliding articulation. The two front vowels, /i/ and /e/ precede a palatal [j] approximant; back long vowels precede the velar [w].

Palauan long vowels can also occur in borrowings from English, a language without typical long vowels but with a much larger vocalic inventory than Palauan has. Often, the words that are borrowed with long vowels contain English tense vowels which have no Palauan equivalents.

(43) *kiis* [kijs] 'keys'

*beek* [bɛjk] 'bake'

Surprisingly, Palauan never borrows long vowels from Japanese, even though the language has long equivalents of all five standard vowels. Long vowels are permitted in native Palauan words, and in words borrowed from English, but there has been a

complete and consistent resistance against borrowing Japanese long vowels. The Japanese long vowel is shortened in every single borrowing analyzed.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (44) | *Jp. koohii* | 'coffee' | *kohi* |
| | Jp. *kyuuri* | 'cucumber' | *kyuri* |
| | Jp. *byoo* | 'second (temporal)' | *bio* |
| | Jp. *udee* | 'upper arm' | *chude* 'bicep' |

(Josephs 1979)

For Palauan, vowel length appears to be an unborrowable feature.

## 8. The Palauan Consonantal System

### 8.1 Palauan Dentals

Palauan has two contrasting dental stops, /t/ and /d/. The phoneme /t/ has two predictable allophones: word-finally, aspirated [$t^h$] occurs, while the unaspirated variant [t] occurs in all other environments

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (45) | *betaot* | [bɛtaot$^h$] | 'ocean bottom' |
| | *chat* | [ʔat$^h$] | 'smoke' |
| | *tetiu* | [tɛtiw] | 'nine' (when counting people) |

In words of foreign origin, unaspirated [t] occurs in all /t/ environments, even word-finally. Aspiration values from the borrowing languages are incorporated into the Palauan pronunciation.

(46) *chamt* [ʔamt] 'government office' (Gm. *Amt*), 'bureau'

*hermet* [hɛrmɛt] 'helmet'

*bet* [bɛt] 'bed' (Gm. *Bett*)

The allophonic variation and distribution of /d/ is complex. Word-initially, before a vowel, /d/ is pronounced as one of two voiced allophones: [d] or [ð]. [d] is likely to occur in fast, informal speech, while [ð] is found in slower, more careful speech.

(47) *dub* [dup] or [ðup] 'dynamite'

*datk* [datkə] or [ðatkə] 'earth'

*debes* [dɛbɛs] or [ðɛbɛs] 'overripe fruit'

Unlike final /t/ aspiration, the above feature is productive in loanwords into Palauan.

(48) *dengua* [dɛnwa] or [ðɛnwa] 'telephone' (Jp. *denwa*)

*dangs* [dans] or [ðans] 'dance'

*deser* [dɛsɛr] or [ðɛsɛr] 'diesel engine' (Gm. Diesel)

Intervocalicaly and word finally, /d/ is usually realized as [ð].

(49) *mad* [mað] 'eye'

*chad* [chað] 'person'

*deledaes* [ðəlɛðaɛs] 'leisure time'

Word-initially before a consonant, /d/ is realized as either /t/ or /θ/ depending upon the articulation of the following consonant. /t/ precedes the bilabials /b/ and /m/, while /θ/ precedes the velars /k/ and /ŋ/. These /d/ initial consonant clusters are often the derived perfectives of transitive verbs.

(50) *dmelii* [tmɛlij] 'nailed'; *meleel* 'to nail'

*dmes* [tmɛs] 'sliced'; *meles* 'to cut'

*dngod* [θŋoð] 'tattoo needle'

Borrowings from English and Japanese with alveolar stops enter Palauan with the appropriate variants of their /t/ and /d/, with predictable alteration. Geminate /t/, a very productive pattern in Japanese, is rarely borrowed into Palauan.

(51) *bento* [bɛnto] 'box lunch' (Jp. *bentoo*)

*boteto* [botɛto] Eng. 'potato'

*dai* [daj] or [ðaj] Eng. 'dais'

*bakudang* [baguðan] 'explosion, bomb' (Jp. *bakudan*)

*chamatter* [ʔamat:ɛr] 'be left over' (Jp. *amatte iru*)

*chuntens* [ʔuntɛns] 'driver' (Jp. *unttenshu*)

### 8.2 Labial Consonants

Palauan has two labial consonants, [m] and [b]. The nasal labial, [m] acts exactly like its English and Japanese counterparts, and the phoneme is borrowed into all Palauan environments without any modification.

(52) *mado* [maðo] 'window'

*hermet* [hɛrmɛt] 'helmet'

*mlim* [mlim] 'your canoe'

The bilabial stop, /b/, has two major allophones: word-initially, and before /l/ and vowels, the voiced allophone [b] occurs. Word-finally and in all other consonant clusters, it is the voiceless [p]. Orthographically, both environments produce *b*. English and Japanese realize both /b/ and /p/, and in most instances, /p/ and /b/ are borrowed as allophones of /b/, and adapted according to appropriate Palauan phonology.

(53) *dembo* [dɛmbo] 'telegram' (Jp. *dempo*)

*baeb* [baɛp] Eng. 'pipe'

chabel [ʔabɛl] Eng. 'apple' (as a flavor) [15]

[15] The Palauan word for the fruit apple is also a foreign borrowing: *ringngo*, from the Japanese *ringo*, 'apple'.

## 8.3 Palauan Liquids

Palauan has two liquids consonants: /l/ and /r/. /l/ is a lateral similar to English [l]. /r/ is phonologically [ɾ] akin to the postalveolar Japanese flap. Two sequential phonemic /r/s result in a trilled [r̃], believed to be one of the few non-lexical innovations borrowed from Spanish.[16] Although /l/ and /r/ are contrasting phonemes in Palauan,

(54) *lisel* 'his coconut tree' vs. *risel* 'its root':

there are many instances where the phonemes occur in free variation in native words, and two are often interchangeable in loanwords as well. Non-indigenous /l/ is often borrowed as /r/ even from the languages that also have the [l] - [ɾ] distinction.

(55) *likl/likr* 'outside'

*merredel/merreder* 'leader'

*sar* 'salt' (Sp. *sal*)

*sukal* 'sugar' (Sp. *azucar*)

*barb* Eng. 'valve'

*hermet* Eng. 'helmet'

*taber* 'blackboard' (Gman. *Tafel)*

Unlike English and Palauan, Japanese lacks the distinction between the two liquid phonemes, and has /r/ without having /l/. In all borrowings, Japanese /r/ is realized as Palauan /r/.

[16] Palauan *rrom* [r̃om] Spanish *ron* 'rum'.

(56) *reksi* 'history' (Jp. *rekishi*)

*chiro* 'color' (Jp. *iro*)

*kouar* 'refuse' (Jp. *kowaru*)

## 8.4 Phonology Introduced By Foreign Languages

The phoneme /h/ has three allophones in Japanese. Before the high back vowel [u], it is the voiceless bilabial fricative [ɸ]; before [i] and [j], /h/ is a voiceless palatal [ç]; and in all other prevocalic environments, it is the glottal fricative [h].

(57) Jp. *huusen* [ɸu:sen] 'balloon'

Jp. *koohii* [ko:çi:] 'coffee'

Jp. *hashi* [haʃi] 'chopsticks'

Despite its wide variation of allophones in Japanese, /h/ is borrowed into Palauan with only a single allophone, [h].

(58) *huseng* [husɛn] 'balloon'

*kohi* [kohi] 'coffee'

*hasi* [hasi] 'chopsticks'

[h] is a new phoneme to Palauan, having been introduced to the language through Spanish, and further developed by an influx of Japanese and English inputs. [17] The establishment of /h/ began with the arrival of loanwords from Spanish, and a phoneme that Spanish has but English and Japanese do not. Borrowings with the voiceless velar fricative [x] (often *g* or *j,* orthographically) were realized in Palauan as [h], a convention that is still followed:

(59) *birhen* [birhɛn] 'The Virgin Mary' Sp. *virgen* [vɪrxɛn] 'virgin'

*Hesus* [hɛsus] Sp. *Jesus* [xesus]

The establishment of /h/ into Palauan through Spanish and Japanese facilitated the borrowing of the phoneme in English loanwords without alteration. [18]

(60) *hermet* [hɛrmət] Eng. 'helmet'

*hos* [hos] Eng. 'hose'

[f] is another phoneme new to Palauan, but its distribution is far smaller than that of [h]. Introduced into the language through American English, there are only two consisten instances of orthographic *f* and phonetic [f] in standard Palauan: *fenda,* from the English 'fender', and *Furans*, 'France'. However, like other non-native phonemes such as [p] and [h], [f] is found in many common proper names inherited from colonial languages, such as *Frederik*, *Fransisco,* and *Fani.* Proper names are often borrowed without adhering to the rules of Palauan phonology the way other items do.

[17] Aside from a few interjections, (*hang,* 'Oh!' and *hngob,* uttered in the presence of an unpleasant smell), no native Palauan words seem to contain [h] phonetically or orthographically.

[18] Still, Palauan words that contain initial [h] number less than 50, and more than half are borrowed from Japanese.

Historically, Palauan has only one fricative phoneme, alveolar /s/, with a single allophone, [s] and no native affricates. /z/, /ʃ/ /tʃ/, and /dʒ/, common in both English and Japanese, are absent from traditional Palauan. English and Japanese /s/ is easily borrowed as Palauan [s]:

(61) *sensei* [sensɛj] Jp. *sensei* 'teacher'

*sumi* [sumi] Jp. *sumi* 'charcoal'

*sangklas* [saŋklas] Eng. 'sunglasses'

*saing* [sain] Eng. 'sign'

Japanese introduced the voiced alveolar /z/ to Palauan, a phoneme that is realized in Japanese as either [dʒ] (word-initially before the high vowels [i] and [u]) or [z]. For Palauan speakers raised on American English, Japanese /z/ is devoiced to /s/ in all initial environments.

(62) *sainen* [sainɛn] Jp. *zainen* [zainɛn] 'social club'

*suri* [suri] Jp. *zuuri* [dʒu:ri] 'crafty'

*kansume* [kansumɛj] Jp. *kanzume* [kanzume] 'can of food'

Palauans raised during the Japanese era and with high Japanese competence often resist this devoicing pattern, and maintain Japanese /z/ in all environments. Palauan [s] is also used as the realization of the English and Japanese fricatives [ʃ] and [ʒ], which the

language lacks. When borrowed [ʃ] or [ʒ] is followed by a vowel than /i/, [i] is inserted.

(63) *Asia* [asia] Eng. 'Asia' [eʒa]

*siasing* [siasin] Jp. *shashin* [ʃaʃɪn] 'photo'

*siobai* [siobaj] Jp. *shoobai* [ʃo:baɪ] 'office'

### 8.5 Palauan Velars

Palauan has the velar stop /k/, which has three major allophones: [$k^h$] word-finally, the voiced stop [g] intervocallicaly, and [k] everywhere else. When voiced and unvoiced velar stops are borrowed from English and Japanese, they are converted into the proper Palauan variant of /k/.

(64) *kirokram* [kirokram] Eng. 'kilogram'

*kakine* [kagine] 'fence' (Jp. *kakine*)

*klas* [klas] Eng. '(drinking) glass'

### 8.6 Palauan Glottal Stop

Palauan also natively has the glottal stop /ʔ/. Orthographically, [ʔ] is *ch*, and [ʔ] in all environments. Neither English nor Japanese has productive phonemic glottal stops, but many vowel-initial borrowings into Palauan are rendered with a prevocalic glottal

stop. /a/ initial words are rare in native Palauan, but words that begin with all the other vowels are quite common in the language. Despite this, there is a strong resistance to borrowing vowel-initial words from other languages. A [ʔ] inserted word-initiallt in these instances.

(65) *chasbering* [ʔasbɛrin] Eng 'aspirin'

*cheio* [ʔɛio] 'nutrition' (Jp. *eiyoo*)

*chokura* [ʔokura] Eng. 'okra'

*chiro* [ʔiro] 'color' (Jp. *iro*)

## 9. Palauan Morphology and Loanword Possession

Palauan morphology has been flexible and adaptable in integrating borrowings from Japanese and English into the language. Loanwords are often incorporated into the phonological, morphological, syntactic system of the language, and undergo the majority of the derivational processes native to the language, such as pluralization, [19] reciprocity, and habituality. The latter verbal processes usually turn borrowed nominals into Palauan intransitive state verbs:

Pluralization: Palauan human plurals are derived through the addition of the prefix *r(e)-* to the noun.[20]

(66) P. *beluu,* 'villager' *rebeluu* 'villagers'

[19] Palauan pluralization morphology is restricted to NPs that refer to humans: *sensei* 'teacher', *resensei* 'teachers'; *bilis* 'dog', **rebilis*.

[20] The affix *re-* can also be used to derive nominals from state verbs, the way the definite article can be added before adjectives in English: *meteet* 'to be wealthy'; *remeteet* 'the wealthy'. This is productive with loanwords as well: *bongkura* 'to be stupid' (Jp. *bonkura* 'stupid'); *rebongkura* 'the foolish'.

Jp. *sensei* 'teacher' *resensei* 'teachers'

Eng. *bulis* 'policeman' *rebulis* 'policemen'

Reciprocity: The prefix *kau-* can be added to nominals to form related reciprocal verbs.

(67) P. *buch* 'spouse' *kaubuch* 'be married to each other'

Jp. *mondai* 'problem' *kaumondai* 'argue over'

Eng. *kosib* 'gossip' *kaukosib* 'gossip about each other'

Habituality: The prefix *beke-* indicates a frequent action or 'prone to'.[21]

(68) P. *illiangel* 'tears' *bekeilliangel* 'prone to crying'

Jp. *mongk* 'complaint' *bekemongk* 'to complain often'

Eng. *basket* 'basketball' *bekebasket* 'to play basketball frequently'

There are certain morphological processes that resist operating on loanwords, namely possession. Palauan has a set of possessor suffixes corresponding to the Palauan pronouns. The forms of the suffixes attach to the possessed noun, and are dependant upon the person and number of the possessor:

(69)

| | *Possessor Suffix* | | *Pronoun* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Singular* | | | | |
| 1st | *-ek* | 'my' | *ngak* | 'I' |
| 2nd | *-em* | 'your' | *kuu* | 'your' |
| 3rd | *-el* | 'his, hers, its' | *ngii* | 'he, she, it' [22] |

[21] The suffix *beke-* is also used to attach 'scent of' to an NP, creating a verbal. The prefix is usually used to express pungency or unpleasantness. *katuu* 'cat'; *bekekatuu* 'to have cat smell'; *kosui* (Jp. *koosui* 'perfume') 'perfume'; *bekekosui* 'to smell strongly of perfume'

*Plural*

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st (inclusive)[23] | *-ed* | 'our' | *kid* | 'we' |
| (exclusive) | *-am* | 'our' | *kemam* | 'we' |
| 2nd | *-iu* | 'your' | *kemiu* | 'you' |
| 3rd | *-ir* | 'their' | *tir* | 'they'[24] |

The overwhelming majority of Palauan words take possessive suffixes, and the overwhelming majority of loanwords do not. There are three levels of morphological possession in Palauan: obligatorily possessed nouns, optionally possessed nouns, and unpossessable nouns.

### 9.1 Optional Possession

Optionally possessed nouns are the morphological default; that is, most native Palauan nouns derive possession through the addition of a genitive suffix to an independent form.

(70) *A blai a milseseb.*

house burnPAST

'The house burned down.'

(71) *A blik a milseseb.*

house1stSG burnPAST

[22] The Palauan 3rd SG pronoun is unmarked for gender. *Ngii a sensei.* 'S/he is a teacher.'
[23] There is strong anecdotal evidence that younger Palauan speakers are merging the 1st plural inclusive and exclusive pronouns, under the influence of English which lacks such a distinction. However, no concrete data currently exists for such a hypothesis.
[24] The 3rd PL pronoun can only refer to human NPs.

'My house burned down.'

(Josephs 1975)

**9.2 Obligatory Possession**

However, there are a few semantic classes of native Palauan words that lack or have lost independent forms, and are always realized with a possessor suffix. The two main classes of obligatorily possessed nouns are comprised of words for parts of the body and kinship terms. In dictionaries and grammars, it is convention to list these items with the 3rd singular possessor suffix.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (73) | *budel* | 'his/her/its skin' | **bud* |
| | *ulul* | 'his/her/its chest' | **ul* |
| | *obekul* | 'his/her older brother | **obek* |
| | *chudelel* | 'his/her/older sister' | **chudel* |

Not all members of either class are obligatorily possessed, and there are many body parts and kinship terms that are optionally possessed.

(74) *A chimel a melemall.*

arm 3rdSG be broken

'His/Her arm is broken'

(75) *A chimek a melelmall.*

arm1stSG be broken

'My arm is broken'

(76) *A Droteo a merurel.*

Droteo great grandparent 3rd SG

'Droteo is his/her great-grandfather'

(77) *A Droteo a merurir.*

Droteo great grandparent 3rd PL

'Droteo is their great-grandfather.'

**9.3 Unpossessable Nouns**

In direct contrast to the obligatorily possessed nouns, there are semantic classes that never receive possessive suffixes. Native Palauan unpossessable nouns often designate flora, fauna, and the natural environment.

(78) *lbolb* 'wolf' **lbobel*

*mesekerrak* 'plum tree' **mesekerrakir*

*kesebii* 'snapper fish' **kesebik*

*chelechol* 'beach' **chelecholed*

It is safe to posit that in a traditional, agricultural society such as Palau, the items of the natural world were outside the realm of individual possession, and were rather considered as independent or communal property.

In addition to this semantically related subgroup, loanwords from foreign languages comprise most of the unpossessable nouns in Palauan. Almost all borrowings - regardless of meaning, phonology, or language of origin – cannot receive genitive suffixing according to standard Palauan morphology.

With foreign loanwords, possessor association is formed by using a noun phrase of possession with the relational word *er*. *er* is Palauan's only preposition, and depending

upon context, can function as any of the following: *in, by, at, to, from, of, on, out of, with, about,* and *because of.*

(79) akmilsa er a skuul.

1stSGsaw3rd SG P school

'I saw him/her at/in the school'

(80) ngliluut el mei er a beluu.

3rdSGPSTagain PTC come P village

'S/he came back to the village'

(Georgopoulos 1991)

This relational word, *er*, is also used to form the possession of the class of morphologically unpossessable nouns. *er* is used to form noun phrases of possession, linking the possessed item to the possessor. Most English and Japanese loanwords fall into this category, and achieve possession thusly:

(81) restorangd er a Droteo

restaurant P Droteo

'Droteo's restaurant'

office er a Fani

office P Fani

'Fani's office'

sensei er ngak

teacher P 1stSG

'My teacher'

hong er tir

book (Jp. *hon*) P 3rd PL

'Their book'

(Josephs 1975)

Palauan characterization phrases are formed in the exact same manner. Unlike possessionals, these phrases assign some sort of descriptive attribute to the item in question without necessarily indicating possession. [25]

(82) hong er a Siabal

book P Japan

'Japanese book'/ 'book about Japan'

sidosia er a Merikel

car (Jp. *jidoosha* 'automobile') P America

'American car'

sensei er a reksi

teacher P history

'history teacher'

There is, however, a small but sizable class of loanword that can receive optional morphological possession. These loanwords are phonologically and syntactically similar to borrowings which remain unpossessable. It is assumed then that these particular words, either through semantic inference or historical innovation, have become so assimilated

[25] Optionally possessed nouns can also undergo the characterization processes: *chad er a Merikel* 'American'; *kall er a Siabal* 'Japanese food'.

into Palauan that they can occur with possessor suffixes. However, some of these words still operate under morphological restrictions, and undergo semantic modification through morphological affixation.

(83) *taem* Eng. 'time'

*temek* 'my time'

*katuu* Eng. 'cat'

*katungel* 'his/her sweetheart'[26]

*subong* 'pants' (Jp. *zubon*)

*subelengel* 'his/her pants'

## 10. Conclusion

With this thesis, I have presented an analysis of language contact in Palau over a fairly brief period of time. I have discussed the basics of multilingualism and language contact in Palau. To this end, I have considered the various semantic, morphological, syntactic, and phonological effects of the two major non-indigenous languages, English and Japanese, on the structure of the native language, Palauan. I have recognized the importance of accurate Palauan word order assessment, and have provided an argument for underlying SVO structure. I have discussed the features that are borrowed into Palauan from foreign languages, and the features that are modified by basic Palauan structure. While Palauan is still in a transitional period, the linguistic innovations borrowed from foreign languages remain an important part of the island's cultural history.

[26] *katungel* can only mean 'his/her sweetheart'. With a literal meaning, *katuu* does not occur with affixational possession: *katuu er ngii*, 'his/her cat'.

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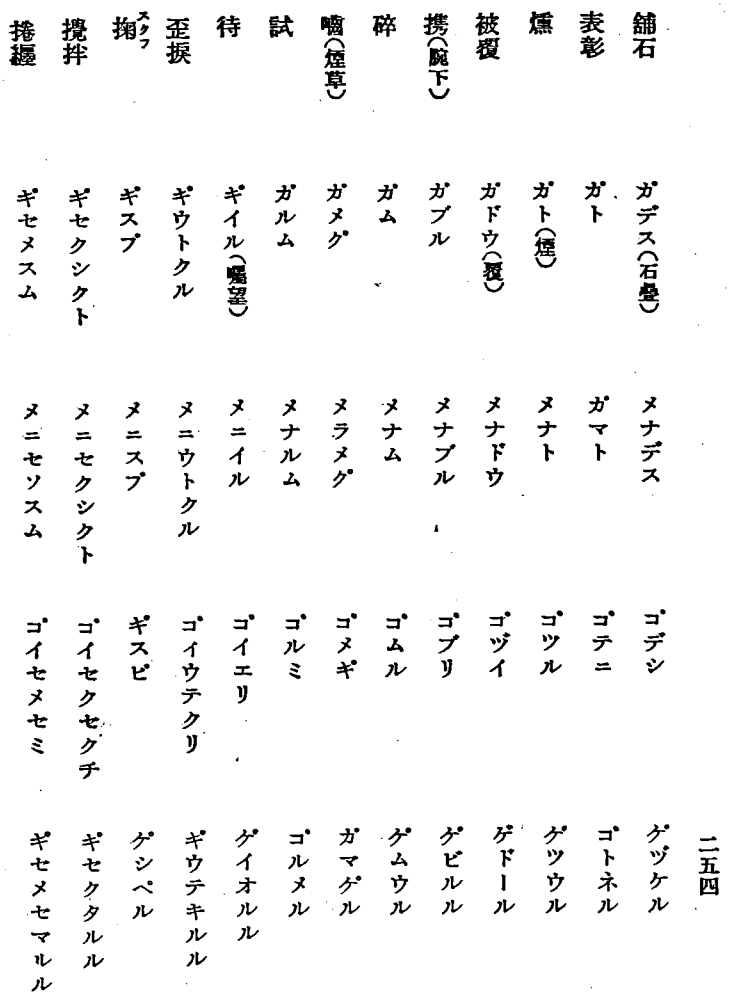
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# APPENDIX I




(Shizuo 1954)

An example of the *kana*-based Palauan orthography. This syllabary fell into disuse during the period of American occupation.

# APPENDIX II

(1) a. *Palauan consonants*

| | bilabial | dental | alveolar | velar | glottal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| stop: voiced | b | | | | |
| voiceless | | | | k | ʔ |
| fricative: voiced | | d | | | |
| voiceless | | t | s | | |
| nasal | m | | | ŋ | |
| liquid | | | r, l | | |

b. *Palauan vowels*

| | front | central | back |
|---|---|---|---|
| high | i | | u |
| mid | e | ə | o |
| low | | a | |

(Georgopoulos1991)

The Palauan Phonological System consists of 16 phonemes: ten consonants and six vowels. The chart is adapted from Georgopoulos (1991).