;TICS

›ple who live in the Boumaa region of the Fijian island of Taveuni dialect of Fijian that is mutually intelligible with Standard Fijian, differing as much perhaps as do the American and British varieties ish. During 1985, R. M. W. Dixon lived in the village of Waitabu and the language spoken there. He found in Boumaa Fijian a wealth of ; features unknown in commonly studied languages and on the basis eldwork prepared this grammar.

: opening chapters, Dixon describes the Islands' political, social, and ic organization, outlines the main points of Fijian phonology, and ; an overview of the grammar. In succeeding chapters, he examines a of grammatical topics in greater detail, including clause and phrase :e, verbal syntax, deictics, and anaphora. The volume also includes a abulary of all forms treated in discussion and three of the fifteen :orded from monolingual village elders on which the grammar is

ile Fijian has been preeminent—in terms of both speakers and stud- 1ong Pacific languages for well over a century, Dixon's is the first ʹé grammar of any nonstandard Fijian language. Add to this the of Dixon's style and the clarity of his exposition, and this becomes ;pensable Fijian grammar, one that will interest Polynesian scholars larly and linguists generally."

Geraghty, Institute of Fijian Language and Culture

ıbstantial addition to the literature on Oceanic languages, Dixon's *ar* is particularly valuable for its extensive treatment of syntax and for ;htful exploration of the semantic bases of various syntactic features. gued challenges to some established views of Fijian grammar are ed, and the author has an eye for those features that are of most to linguistic typology. Dixon does not, however, let doctrinaire ical concerns dominate his portrayal of the genius of Boumaa."

:ew Pawley, University of Auckland

:on is renowned for his pioneering work on the indigenous languages :ralia, work that has revolutionized our understanding of the struc- f these languages in addition to providing major contributions to linguistic theory. Here Dixon turns his attention to Boumaa Fijian, ng a masterly demonstration of how the parallel use of textual analy- fieldwork elicitation can lead to a descriptive grammar far superior to ng just one of these methods. He succeeds, moreover, in elucidating spects of Fijian syntax that are most controversial and most relevant ent theoretical debate."

ard Comrie, University of Southern California

W. Dixon is professor of linguistics and department chair at the lian National University. He is the editor of the three-volume *Hand- Australian Languages* and author of *The Dyirbal Language of North land*, *A Grammar of Yidin*, and *The Languages of Australia*.

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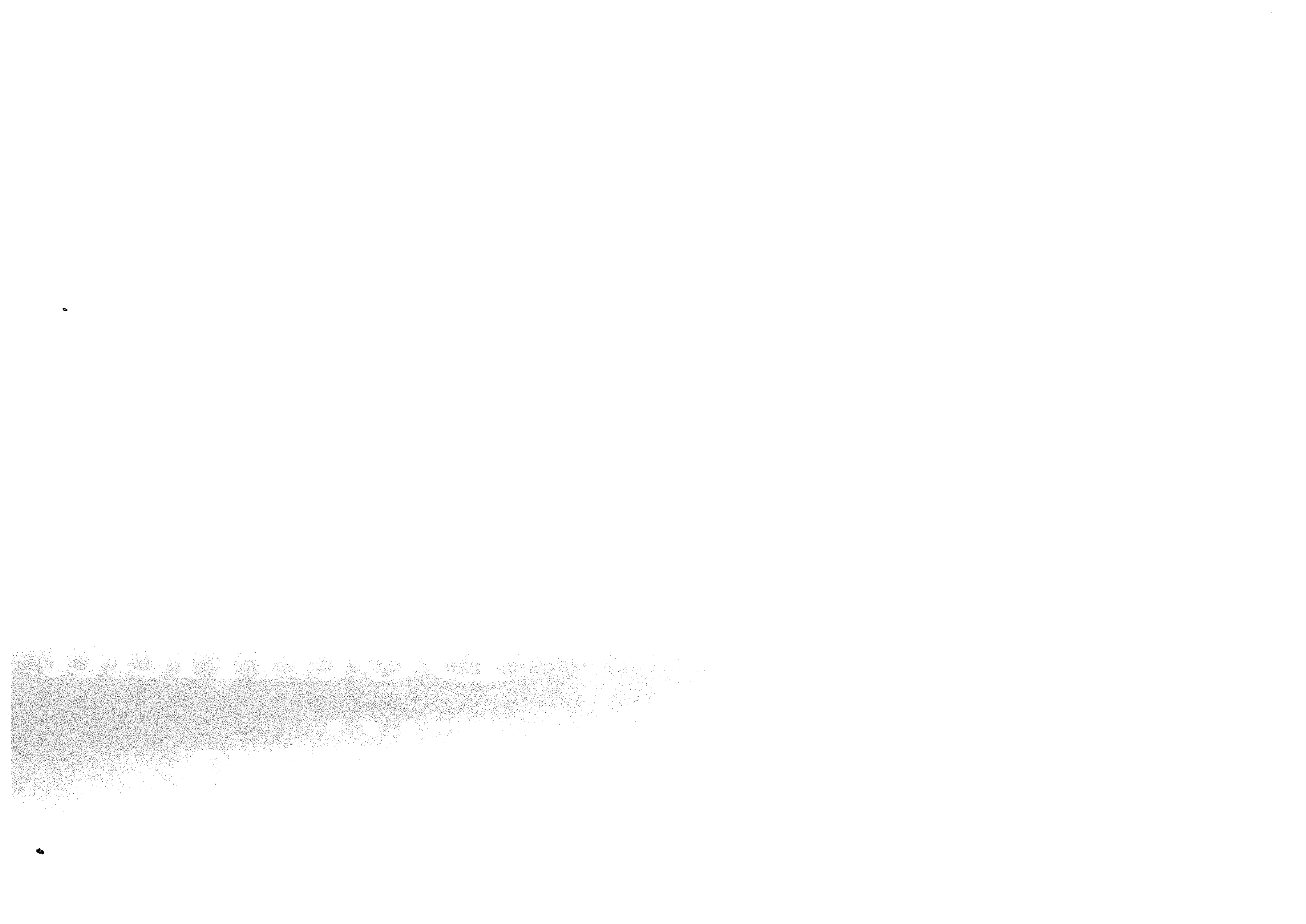

A Grammar of Boumaa Fijian

R. M. W. Dixon

A Grammar of Boumaa Fijian

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R. M. W. Dixon is professor of linguistics, Australian National University. He is the author of *The Dyirbal Language of North Queensland* (1972), *A Grammar of Yidin* (1977), *The Languages of Australia* (1980), and *Where Have All the Adjectives Gone? and Other Essays in Semantics and Syntax* (1982), and the co-editor of *Handbook of Australian Languages* (1979–83).

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Geraghty would be the best possible person to write a grammar of Fijian, but he has no present inclination to do so. He read most carefully through a draft of this grammar, correcting many points and suggesting further generalisations. His input has been considerable, and cannot adequately be acknowledged.

Father David Arms is perhaps the leading grammarian of Standard Fijian. He also read right through my draft and spent eight hours (in Suva) going over it with me, offering corrections, further examples, and more generalisations. Aubrey Parke spent many years in Fiji as a District Officer and, like Geraghty and Arms, speaks the language fluently; we had four or five long sessions together, in Canberra, in which he went through the grammar, chapter by chapter, helping me to amend and improve it.

I was at first hesitant to publish, partly in view of the recent long grammar of Standard Fijian by Schütz (1986). Geraghty, Arms, and Parke helped me refine every aspect of this work, and offered strong encouragement that I should go ahead and publish. Without their help and support I should not have wanted to do so.

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Inoke Soqo.o.viti provided unstinting help with every part of my work. He spent long hours helping to transcribe texts, going through lists of verbs, saying whether it was possible to say this, or that, and which one was better. Inoke's interest, his persistence, and his intelligence were a source of strength and inspiration. (For an illustration, please consult examples 8.31–4 and 8.43–5, in chapter 8.)

Josefa Cookanacagi (Sepo) is one of the busiest men I know. He has a large family (thirteen children in all) to provide for from his own garden. Sepo is one of the few people in Waitabu who knows English, and many people ask him for help in their dealings with the world outside. He is also a trained bookkeeper, looking after the accounts for the village store, the cooperative, the copra enterprise. Sepo plays a large part in the church and various Christian groups.

On top of all this, Sepo welcomed me into his family for a period of six months. He travelled all over Waini'eli and Boumaa, introducing me to the

best storytellers, providing introductions to all the most important and useful people, arranging attendance at district meetings. Sepo made time in his busy schedule to help transcribe some of the texts I recorded and to check the transcriptions of others.

Sepo provided a small house to live in. Then, when that had to be taken over for another purpose, he built—almost singlehandedly—another one. Many things happen in a Fijian village that can be bewildering to an outsider. Sepo always made a point of explaining them. Most of all, he explained the language—why it must be said this way and not that, how the dialects differ, the factors that are responsible for language change.

Almost every day, Sepo would come in, sit down, and ask if I had any questions (I always did have!). He had thought about language all his life, and now shared with me the insights he had attained. Together, we went through the grammar, topic by topic. Sepo seldom failed to produce illuminating examples, to explain a crucial contrast.

I sent him a typed draft in December 1985. When I returned to Waitabu the following June, Sepo had read the first eleven chapters and went through them with me, correcting some spellings and examples and suggesting further contrasts (such as that between *mai wai.tui* and *mai+na wai.tui* in §9.3). He carried on reading the grammar after I had returned to Canberra and in November 1986 sent me a notebook with comments and corrections on every chapter, and on the texts and vocabulary. This is, in a real sense, Sepo's grammar.

Moomoo, o ca'aca'a va'akaukaua—e levu a omu itavi. Ia, o aa veivu'e vei au i na veigauna. O aa va'ataavulici au va'avina'a—o i'o, o qase ni vuli duadua sara i na vuravura tauco'o. Au saa va'avinavina'a va'alevu vei i'o.

Annette Schmidt, who pursued a sociolinguistic investigation into language use and language variation, was my partner in fieldwork, an adventure into a new culture, very different from that in which we had been brought up—taro and breadfruit and cassava to eat (no bread or milk or cheese); Christian church twice a day and devils rampant on the beach on moonlit nights (but no show of affection permitted between people in public); sleeping on woven mats over coconut leaves on the floor of a reed hut (no furniture, no newspapers); bathing almost fully clothed, as instructed by the first missionaries, under a bamboo pipe a quarter of a mile from the village; carrying home water in a bucket (no electricity either); and five cyclones. Dulubu ŋaygu, ŋinungu ŋaja binjilbin muguymuguy.

March 1987

Organisation and Cross-references

Chapters 4 and 5 provide a quick overview of the main points of Fijian grammar; they could be taken alone, as a brief sketch grammar of the language. Later chapters each deal in turn with a particular grammatical topic, and presuppose the information given in chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 1 provides background information, and chapter 2 a summary of the phonology. Chapter 3, on the tricky topic of "word" in Fijian, occurs at its logical place but could well be read last of all (or the reader could just look at the first five pages of chapter 3, before going on to the grammar in chapters 4, 5, and following).

Cross-references are of three types:

those preceded by § refer to chapter and section number, e.g. §4.6 is section 6 of chapter 4;

those preceded by T refer to sentences from the three texts included at the end of the book, e.g. T4.6 is sentence 6 of text 4;

those beginning with a number refer to examples in the grammar, which (from chapter 7 onwards) are numbered consecutively within each chapter, e.g. 8.6 is the sixth example in chapter 8.

Abbreviations

Pronouns are referred to by combinations of the following abbreviations:

1	first person	sg	singular number	pl	plural number ("many")
2	second person	du	dual number	inc	inclusive (of addressee)
3	third person	pa	paucal number ("a few")	exc	exclusive (of addressee)

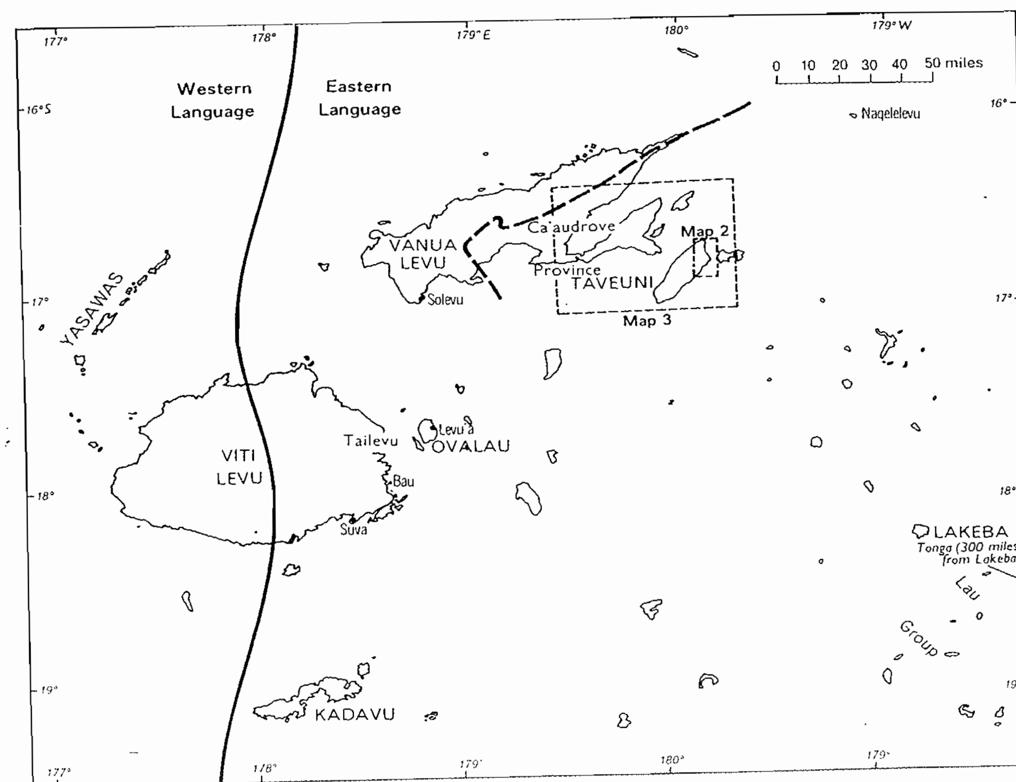
For example: 1excdu is first person exclusive dual; 3pa is third person paucal.

The following boundary symbols are used (they are fully explained in chapter 3):

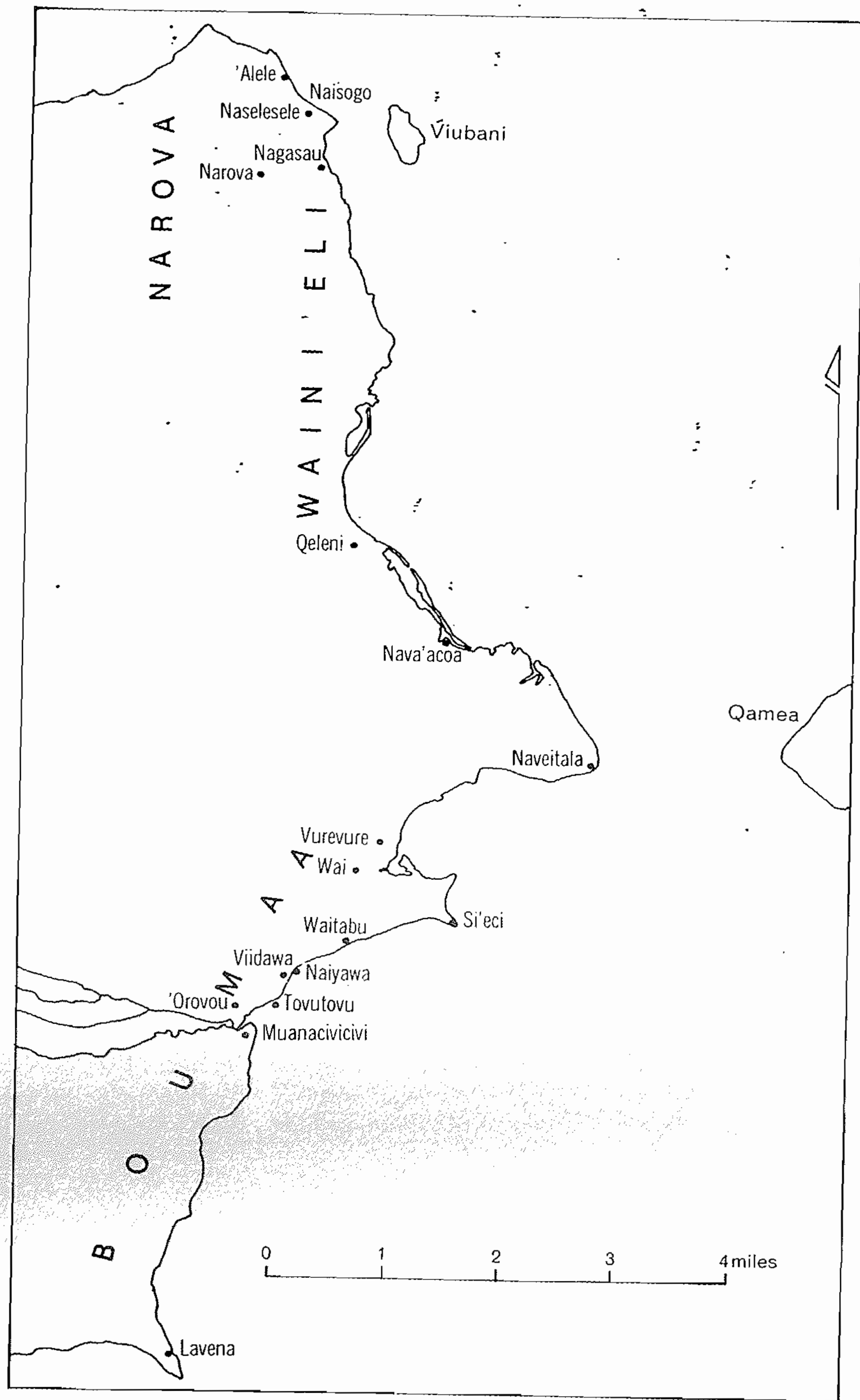
X-X, X- X	boundary between root and affix;
X+X	two grammatical words that make up one phonological word;
X+ Y	X is phonologically a clitic to Y;
X-	X is a bound noun (which must take a possessive affix, etc.; see §10.5);
	separates phonological words within a grammatical word;
#	word boundary
=	syllable boundary

Other abbreviations used are:

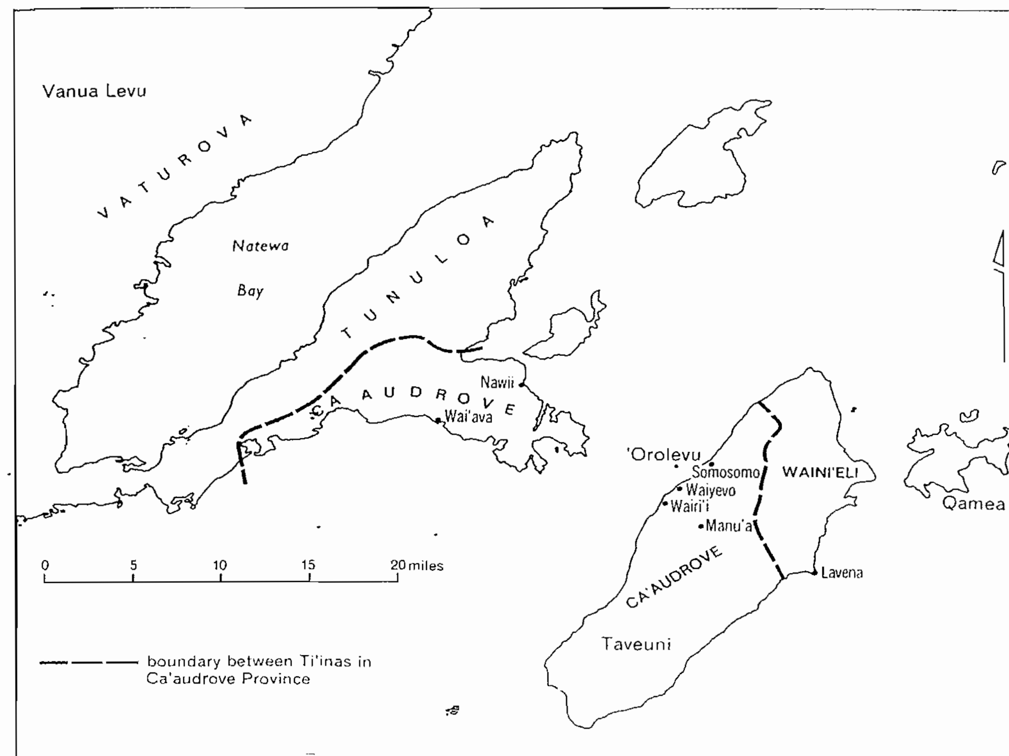
A	transitive subject function	OHF	Old High Fijian (church language)
ART	article	PASS	passive
ASP	aspect marker	PREP	preposition
B	Boumaa dialect of Fijian	REDUP	reduplication
C	Ca'audrove dialect of Fijian	S	intransitive subject function
CLASSIF	classifier	SPONT	spontaneous prefix
COLL	collective prefix	TR	transitive suffix
FUT	future	V	Standard Fijian
HABIT	habitual	and	´ primary stress ` secondary stress
MODIF	modifier		
O	transitive object function		



Map 1 The Fiji Islands



MAP 2 NORTHEAST PART OF TAVEUNI (showing places mentioned in text 4)



MAP 3 SOUTHEAST VANUA LEVU AND TAVEUNI (showing places from the first part of text 6)

1 Introduction

There are (on linguistic criteria) two, closely related, languages spoken by the native population over the one hundred inhabited islands of the Fiji group (Pawley and Sayaba 1971). One is in the western part of the main island of Viti Levu and offshore islands to the west; the other is in eastern Viti Levu and on all islands to the south, northeast, and east (see map 1). Each of the two languages exists in a considerable number of dialects.

In 1835 missionaries came (from Tonga) first to Lakeba in the Lau Group, and then to the main island of Viti Levu. They soon realised that it would be a daunting task to translate the Bible into the many different local dialects and so decided to adopt Bauan, a dialect of the eastern language which had something of the status of a lingua franca, as the medium through which all evangelical work would be conducted.

The language used in Bible translation was in fact a modified form of Bauan. Some elements from the Lau dialect were (probably unwittingly) mixed in, and the missionaries introduced other features (such as the complex preposition *ki vei*), either in a conscious attempt to regularise paradigms, or simply because they had not achieved a full understanding of the grammar. This "church language" has been referred to by Paul Geraghty (1984:41) as Old High Fijian, or OHF.

There is now also a fully developed Standard Fijian. Although it is often called Bauan, the standard dialect is today not exactly the same as that spoken on the island of Bau. Standard Fijian is used—to the almost total exclusion of local dialects—in schools, in newspapers and books, in radio programs, and in government documents. It is also the lingua franca used for communication between people whose own dialects differ markedly.

This grammar deals with Boumaa, a dialect of the eastern language that is mutually intelligible with Standard Fijian. Some comparative notes are included on points where Boumaa differs from Standard Fijian.

1.1 Political organisation

The most important social and political unit in Fiji is the Yavusa, a group of people who all trace their origins to a single ancestor god. There are perhaps a thousand Yavusa over the whole of Fiji; each Yavusa is associated with a separate village.

Within each Yavusa there are several Mataqali (or clans); a Mataqali consists of a number of Ito'ato'a (extended family units); an Ito'ato'a will consist of a number of related families, each normally living in a separate house.

A group of three or four Yavusa is linked together into a Vanua (literally "land", but here referring both to a social confederation and to the territory

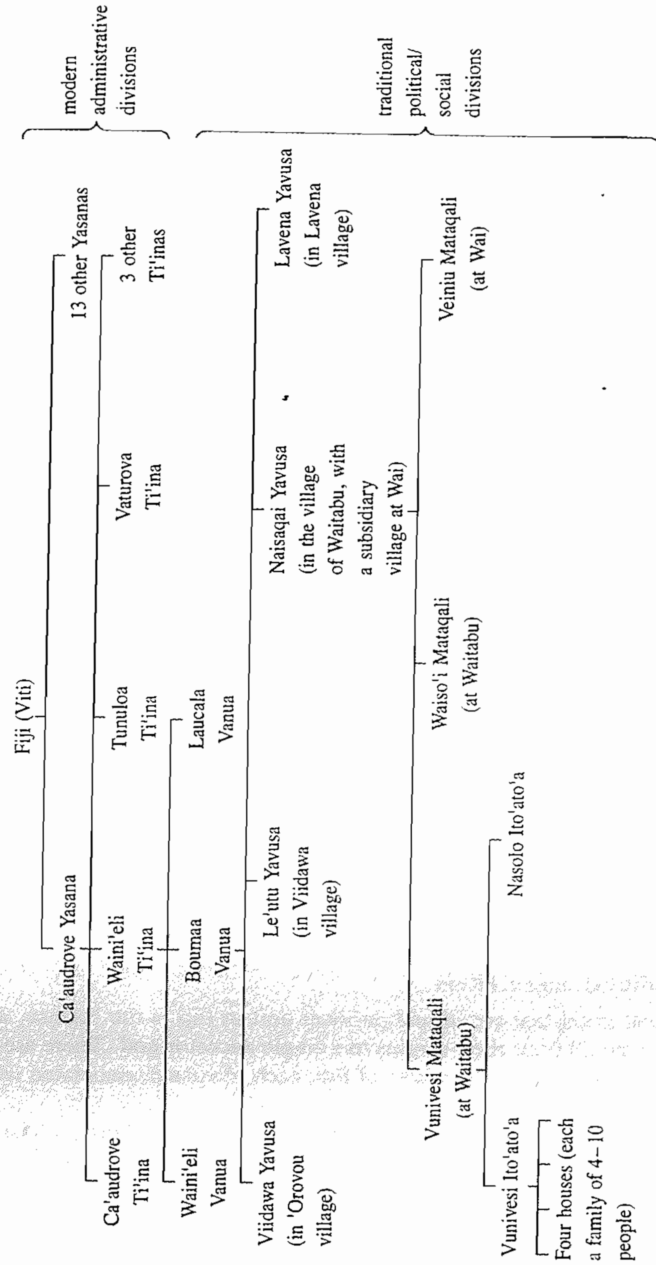


FIGURE 1 POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION

the Yavusa occupy). A collection of continguous Vanua may group together as a Mata-ni-tuu (confederation).

In recent times, colonial administrators divided Fiji into fourteen Yasanas (provinces) and each of these into a number of Ti'inas (districts). The modern political unit of Ti'ina often corresponds to a traditional Mata-ni-tuu. Figure 1 illustrates these various divisions. Note that there is a traditional head for each Ito'ato'a, Mataqali, Yavusa, and Vanua, and a government-appointed head for each Ti'ina and Yasana.

It will be seen that sometimes a "part" has the same name as a "whole", on the next higher line; this indicates that the chief of the whole comes from that part. For example, the head of the Vunivesi Ito'ato'a is also head of the Vunivesi Mataqali; he is in addition chief over the whole Naisaqai Yavusa. His title is Tui Nasau (literally: King of Nasau), after a village in which the Naisaqai people used to live in the last century, before moving down to the coast.

Tui Nasau is only a minor figure in the Boumaa Vanua. The head of this Vanua, called the Vuu-ni-Saa, is traditionally drawn from the Viidawa Yavusa; the village in which he lives—called 'Orovou, or sometimes just Boumaa—is the capital of the Vanua. The chief of the Waini'eli Vanua (called Tuei) is the most important chief in the Waini'eli Ti'ina. And Tui Ca'au, the chief of the Ca'audrove Ti'ina, is the paramount chief in Ca'audrove Yasana.

The name for Fiji is, in the Standard language, "Viti"; in many dialects a *t* is palatalised before *i*, giving Viji. Tongans use "Fisi". (The English-language name, Fiji, appears to be a blend of these last two.) Standard Fijian will be referred to here by the abbreviation V (for Viti).

From 7 January until 30 June 1985 (and again for a short period in June 1986) I lived in the village of Waitabu, under the protection of the Vunivesi Ito'ato'a, and studied the language spoken in that village. People throughout the five villages of the Boumaa Vanua say that they speak "the Boumaa language"; I never heard anyone suggest that there exist linguistic differences between villages. This is referred to here by the abbreviation B.

Some Boumaa people say that a slightly different dialect is spoken in the Vanua of Waini'eli, but I was never able to get any consistent statement of what the linguistic differences are (there may possibly not be any).

Boumaa Vanua is on the island of Taveuni. Waini'eli Vanua lies north of Boumaa on Taveuni and also includes the western part of the neighbouring island of Qamea. (The rest of Qamea belongs to the Laucala Vanua.) The remainder of Taveuni belongs to the Ca'audrove Ti'ina, which also extends to part of the large island of Vanua Levu.

The main dialect of the Ca'audrove Ti'ina (here referred to as C) shows some important differences from Boumaa-Waini'eli speech. C is the high-prestige dialect within Taveuni, mainly because it is the speech of the paramount chief, Tui Ca'au (who lives at Somosomo, on Taveuni); in addition, the local administrative offices, the main shops, and the three secondary schools

(one Catholic, one Wesleyan, and one run by the government) are located in the Ca'audrove part of the island.

1.2 Language and life in Boumaa

The glottal stop (as the middle of a Cockney English pronunciation of *butter*, "bu'er") does not occur in Standard Fijian (V), but over most of Taveuni and much of Vanua Levu there is a glottal stop corresponding to the *k* of the V dialect; thus *vina'a* "good" and *la'o* "go" in B and C correspond to *vinaka* and *lako* in V (the standard phonetic symbol for glottal stop is ʔ, but the symbol ' is employed in this book). There is a useful verb *gato* "use a glottal stop"; both B and C are Gato dialects.

Another phonetic feature of B is that there are a fair number of words with *p*—as in Tongan, and the Lau dialects of Fijian which come between Taveuni and Tonga, and some dialects in Vanua Levu, but not as in V. In some grammatical forms in B an initial *n* has been lost; the common article is mostly *a* (*na* in V), and "his" is *ona* (*nona* in V). Boumaa people characterise their dialect as being "shorter and lighter" than V.

B has almost exactly the same grammatical system as V; it is only some of the forms which vary a little (as just illustrated). The major difference concerns demonstratives (see chapter 7); all of V, C, and B have three series of demonstratives, with the same meanings but different forms.

Perhaps the most significant grammatical difference is that in V the passive form of a polysyllabic verbal ending is identical with one of the active forms (that used before a pronoun or name as object), while in B the two forms are distinct (see §5.3.1, §18.6).

On the lexical level it is clear that B has in recent years been moving closer towards V. Older residents of Waitabu mention original B forms like *viro* "return", but today only a few of the elders use *viro*, and then only occasionally; it has been almost completely replaced by the V root *lesu*.

It is likely that two or three generations ago B had about 80 percent of its vocabulary either identical to or closely cognate (substituting ' for *k*) with V. Due to the establishment of a local school, and increased opportunities for travel, some original B forms have been replaced, and the figure has risen towards 90 percent. B does, however, retain a definite set of distinctive dialectal features, which Boumaa people are proud to recognise as diagnostic of their mode of speech. There is little likelihood of the B dialect being lost in the foreseeable future.

All daily communication in Waitabu involves some variety of Fijian. No more than half-a-dozen of the 120 villagers speak passable English, and this is only used if a foreigner calls. (Almost all the people over fifty understand no English. The younger ones have been exposed to some English at school—which most of them have attended haphazardly for five or six years—but have only a rudimentary knowledge of it.)

There is a good deal of dialect mixing. Older people and very young children may speak the purest Boumaa. Children of school age tend to include a lot of V features (since all school books and instruction are in V). Church services consist mostly of hymns and stylised prayers, in OHF; sermons and occasional extempore prayers may be at least partly in B. Every person's daily speech is a mixture, to a greater or lesser extent, of B, V, and also C, the prestige Gato dialect of Taveuni island. We have said that demonstratives constitute a major point of dialectal difference; demonstratives from all of B, V, and C may be heard mingled in a single utterance.

But people are generally aware of which features belong to which dialect. When a recording is played back, they will correct themselves, replacing intrusive C or V forms with the correct B equivalents; and they are quite consistent when doing this.

There are many useful accounts of Fijian culture, from Williams (1858, reissued 1982) to Ravuvu (1983), so that it would be inappropriate to include here more than the briefest sketch of life in Waitabu.

The Boumaa people are subsistence farmers, growing *dalo* "taro", *manioke* "cassava", *vudi* "plantain", *parasa* (B; *varasa*, V) "string onion", *uvi* "yam", *'umala* "sweet potato", *bele* "edible hibiscus leaves," and also *waqona* (B; *yaqona*, V) "kava" in small patches cleared from the forest. The land in Taveuni is so rich that gardens need relatively little attention; about ten hours a week, spread over the year, is sufficient for a man to provide a full stock of food for his family. *Tiivoli* "wild yam", *weleti* "papaya, pawpaw", *uto* "breadfruit", and of course *niu* "coconut" grow freely in the forest and are harvested as needed. (They may also be planted, around the village and in forest plots.)

The main source of protein is fish, caught daily in the sea, mostly by women. For a special feast a pig may be purchased or even, if it is the wedding of the son of an important man, a cow.

Monetary income for Waitabu people comes from selling copra (smoked coconut kernels). With the proceeds from this, and also with money sent home by relatives who have regular jobs in Fijian towns, they buy sugar (which is consumed in prodigious quantities—about one kilo per person per week), rice, flour, salt, cooking oil, tea, curry powder, onions, garlic, yeast, soap, cigarettes, clothing, and kitchenware.

Besides the hereditary village chief (*tuuraga ni vanua*), who has the highest authority, there is also a village secretary (*tuuraga ni 'oro*), who is elected for a limited period and serves as a link between village and government. For one day each week all the men and women do "village work"—building a new store, cutting the grass between houses, cleaning and tidying the village, etc. Such work is organised by the village secretary and announced the previous evening in a message shouted from several points in the village (see text 8a).

Life in a Fijian village involves a succession of meetings: there are meetings of Ito'ato'a, of Mataqali, of the whole village, of the youths' committee, of the married women of one Mataqali, of the rugby players, and so on.

There are also many ceremonies. When a man begins to harvest any crop,

he must present (*sevu*) some to his older brothers or to his father, and the recipient must give thanks, often by presenting a whale's tooth (the most valued item in Fijian society). If anyone has committed a wrong, he must beg forgiveness (*soro*) in a special ceremony of atonement, presenting a whale's tooth. On betrothal, marriage, death, birth, or the first visit of a child to its mother's village, there is a solemn ceremony, with the presentation of whale's teeth, mats, or kava. A visitor to a village must make a presentation to the chief of kava or, if he is going to stay for any length of time, of a whale's tooth. And so forth.

All of these meetings and ceremonies are conducted in a ritualistic manner with fairly fixed speech formulas. Most of them are accompanied by the consumption of kava; the root is pounded to a powder and a drink made, which is offered to the participants according to a solemn convention of precedence. Kava is also drunk at social gatherings, which may take place several times a week and last for five or six hours, but even here the rules for preparation and serving must be faithfully followed.

Food is of paramount importance to Fijians. A family and guests must sit cross-legged, in strict order of hierarchy (men separated from women) along an eating mat, for even the most casual meal. Meetings and ceremonies are often accompanied by food. For any important occasion a feast (*magiti*) may be organised, with a group of women and men spending days in preparation for it.

Everything is to be shared in Fijian society. Accumulation of goods or food or money by one individual is considered antisocial and "bad". Anyone who has a lot of something should give most of it away; and anyone who lacks a certain commodity will go and *'ere'ere* (B; *kerekere*, V), "request" or "beg" it from someone else. A *'Ere'ere* cannot reasonably be refused, and there is no expectation that it should be specifically repaid.

Fijians have a classificatory kinship system: everyone in a Yavusa is "classed" into one of about fifteen kin types with respect to a given person. For example, father's brother is classed with father, and his children are treated as brothers and sisters. Kinship links at Waitabu divide into three types: (i) joking, e.g. certain cross-cousins, who can interact freely and are expected to "joke" with each other; (ii) avoidance, e.g. father-in-law, daughter-in-law, who are restricted to limited contact, with formal and very polite speech interchange; (iii) neither joking nor avoidance; this type can be realised as an authority relationship, as in the case of actual parent and child. (Schmidt 1988 has a full treatment of this topic, and also of the language of ceremonies and presentations.)

Before the coming of Europeans, the Fijians had a well-developed religion with a panoply of gods, most or all of whom were deified ancestors. They believed that there was an afterlife and that you entered it in the physical condition in which you left this world. This may partly explain why an old man whose health was beginning to fail might ask to be killed (by being buried alive) and why a wife would expect to be strangled when her husband died.

The Fijians were cannibals, of the very worst sort. A chief would order someone killed just because he wanted a feast of human flesh. The stories of cruelty are frightening: parts of a person's body might be cut off, cooked, and fed him while he was still alive; a canoe was once launched over the bodies of living people, killing them. A live man might be buried with each corner post of a chief's house, to lend it strength.

Then Christianity came, with a new, more powerful god. The missionaries persevered, and today everyone in Fiji has—at least, superficially—embraced the new religion. There is no choice involved, as there is not in most aspects of Fijian life. If a Fijian (or a visiting linguist) should fail to attend church at Waitabu, he or she would be regarded as a "bad person" and ostracised.

But, although people will seldom talk of it, the old religion lives on. All sickness is believed to be caused by spirits, implanted by witchcraft, of which every village has its suspected practitioners. (The alleged witches in Waitabu go to church more than anyone else—to try to prove that they are *not* witches.)

Thus, Christianity has not replaced the traditional religion. People simultaneously follow both paths, and invoke the Christian deity as an antidote for the wiles of their traditional gods (or devils, as they are now called).

Fijians have always been fierce and fearless fighters. Nowadays they serve with distinction in wars and in peacekeeping forces. The Fijian rugby team is a power to be reckoned with. And although life in a Fijian village is outwardly tranquil, if a fight should break out, hidden furies may be released that can lead to serious injury.

Fijians are said to have stopped eating people about 1870, but no rational, human decision was involved. It was just that Wesleyan missionaries and Catholic priests informed the Fijians that the new Christian god forbade the practice.

1.3 Linguistic profile of Fijian

Every syllable in Fijian has the structure CV or V (C = consonant, V = vowel). There are 22 basic phonemes, 17 consonants, and 5 vowels; 3 further consonants have limited distribution, mostly in loan words. A particular feature of Fijian is that the voiced stops are always pronounced with nasal onset, *ᵐb, ⁿd* and *ŋg;* thus the sound between the two vowels in Nadi counts as a single consonant even though it is pronounced as [ⁿd], i.e. [naⁿdi].

It is necessary to recognise two units, "phonological word" and "grammatical word". One grammatical word may involve a number of phonological words, or vice versa, or a phonological word may consist of the whole of one grammatical word and a part of another.

Fijian is an agglutinating language with little allomorphic variation. There are no case inflections; tense and aspect are generally shown by independent clitics or words within the predicate complex. Fijian has a highly developed pronoun system with singular, dual, paucal, and plural in first, second, and third person; there is also an inclusive/exclusive distinction in first person

non-singular. Third person singular is in several ways rather different from other pronoun combinations. Place names behave like personal names in some respects and like common nouns in other ways.

The Fijian clause is predicate-centred. A predicate involves obligatory reference to subject and (if transitive) to object; it can constitute a complete clause. Either subject or object (or, more rarely, both) can be expanded by a noun phrase, which usually comes after the predicate ("they are going, the chiefs"). There is a parallel between the structure of a clause and that of a noun phrase; there may be a possessive pronoun before the head noun and this can optionally be expanded by a full possessor NP after the head ("their food, the chiefs"). Quite naturally, a clause can be nominalised, to be subject or object of a main verb ("I saw [their coming, the chiefs]").

It is important in Fijian to distinguish syntactic function (predicate, subject, object, etc) from word class (verb, noun, and the rest). There is a many-to-one correspondence between class and function; a verb can function as the head of a noun phrase (although not so often as it is predicate head), and a noun can fill the predicate head slot (although nothing like so frequently as it is head of an NP). It is possible to distinguish verb, noun, adjective, and other parts of speech with a fair degree of clarity in terms of syntactic and morphological criteria. In Fijian, numbers constitute a distinct word class, with greatest similarity to verbs.

A predicate will generally come first in any clause, followed by noun phrases. Where both subject and object NPs occur, subject-object and object-subject orders are equally common in texts, although object-subject is generally preferred in elicitation. Indirect-object, locational, temporal, and other peripheral NPs can come anywhere after the predicate. Any NP (sometimes even two NPs) can be topicalised and moved to the front of a clause, but there should normally be some "marker" of the NP(s) in the predicate.

Most verbs can be used both intransitively (root only) and transitively (root plus affix); it is not unusual for a verb to have two (or even three) different transitive forms (distinct affixes) with contrastive meanings. For about half the verbs intransitive subject (S) corresponds to transitive subject (A) e.g. *la'o* "go", *la'o-va* "go for"; for the other half S corresponds to transitive object (O) e.g. *lo'i* "be bent", *lo'i-a* "bend".

There is a rich set of five complement types—clauses filling a subject or object slot for a verb like "hear", "finish", "know", or "suffice". Negation is shown by a verb, taking a clausal complement: "it is not the case that John went" (= "John didn't go").

Boumaa Fijian has only three prepositions, covering "to, at, concerning", "from", and "together with". In many instances where other languages would use cases or just prepositions, Fijian employs a preposition plus a noun or verb—"on" is dealt with through *dela-* "top"; "until" through *yaco* "to reach"; "through" by *oti* "to end, finish"; and all of "between", "during" and "inside" by *loma-* "interior".

There is no deletion of a shared pronominal subject between two linked clauses—one must say "we plan for us to go" rather than "we plan to go". Related to this, Fijian has no coreferentiality constraints on complex sentence constructions—for instance, a relative clause must have a noun phrase in common with the main clause, but it may be in any function whatsoever in either clause. There is no mark of reflexive, either in the form of a reflexive pronoun or of a reflexive marker on the verb—one simply says "I saw me".

The vocabulary is rich in areas that have social significance. For example, cleanliness is greatly valued and we find a profusion of verbs for washing—*vulu.vulu* "wash hands", *taavoi* "wash face", *sava* "wash body, etc", among others. There is also rich use of metaphors: the head is the most respected part of the body—to touch someone's head is to invite a fight, and in days gone by touching a chief's head might be punishable by death. *Ulu-* "head" is extended to mean "most important" or "most respected"—the kava ceremony is the *ulu* (most important) chiefly ritual; whale's teeth are the *ulu* (highest) wealth for Fijians.

Fijian has many homonyms, among lexemes (see §18.1) and among grammatical elements (see chapter 20). Discourse often involves a fair amount of repetition, which can help to resolve uncertainties and ensure that in most cases the hearer understands the message intended by the speaker.

1.4 Fijian within the Austronesian language family

The Austronesian family is divided into two major subgroups—one comprising a handful of languages indigenous to Taiwan (Formosan) and the other including all other languages (the Malayo-Polynesian subgroup). Malayo-Polynesian is further divided into two extensive branches. There are over 300 languages in the western branch, spoken by more than 150 million people in Malaysia, Indonesia, Borneo, Malagasy, the Philippines, and part of Irian Jaya. The eastern, or Oceanic, branch comprises almost 500 languages in coastal areas of New Guinea and on islands in Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia; they are spoken by a total of only about two million people. The two closely-related Fijian languages, with about a quarter of a million speakers between them, are the most widely spoken of Pacific languages.

Proto-Oceanic (the reconstructed ancestor of all the languages in the eastern branch of Malayo-Polynesian) had a number of features that are retained in Fijian, as in many other modern languages: four numbers in pronouns (including a dual derived from **dua* "two" and a paucal from **tolu* "three"); three classifiers; a common noun marker (or "article") *na;* a prefix *i-* deriving nouns from verbs; and transitive-type verbal suffixes *-(C)i* and *-(C)aki(ni)* (where C is a consonant).

Proto-Oceanic had five vowels (as does modern Fijian)—the three proto-Austronesian vowels **i*, **u* and **a*, and also *e* and *o*, which developed from proto-Austronesian **ay* and **aw* respectively.

Many aspects of family trees that have been proposed for the Oceanic

group are controversial. Some of the published schemes have been based on comparison of short vocabulary lists (lexicostatistics) or on slender phonological shifts. What does seem clear is that proto-Fijian (the ancestor of the two modern languages) was a close relative of Rotuman and of proto-Polynesian (the ancestor of Tongan, Samoan, Tahitian, Hawaiian, Maori, and other languages in the close-knit Polynesian family). Proto-Fijian and proto-Polynesian may have been spoken about three thousand years ago.

The Fijian-Polynesian relationship is evident from a number of features that these languages share. These include: the proper article *ko;* paucal pronouns ending in *-tou* (a development from original **-tolu*); Polynesian *fie* and Fijian *via* "want to"; Polynesian *tau* and Fijian *dau-* "habitual, persistent"; a preposition *mai* in addition to a predicate modifier *mai* (the latter is found in other Oceanic languages); the incorporation of an object NP into the verb. Both Fijian and Polynesian languages usually have the predicate in clause-initial position, whereas proto-Oceanic probably had the subject noun phrase preceding the predicate. (Note that unlike such Polynesian languages as Tongan and Samoan, Fijian lacks an ergative marker on a transitive subject noun phrase.)

(The information in this section is largely based on Pawley 1972, 1974; Blust 1977; and Pawley and Green 1984.)

1.5 Data base for this study

This grammar is squarely based on a corpus of 13 texts that I recorded from 6 different informants, all aged at least 55 and all monolingual in Fijian. One storyteller came from Waini'eli and the others from Boumaa; all tended to mix in some features from the C and V dialects. I also recorded a meeting of chiefs from the Waini'eli and Boumaa Vanuas, and a number of announcements by the village crier.

An inductive approach was followed. I would first look at all examples of a construction type in the texts, and try to formulate appropriate grammatical generalisations and rules. Some grammatical elicitation was carried out at a late stage—checking hypotheses, filling gaps in morphological and syntactic paradigms, and checking the few points reported in earlier grammars that had not featured in my corpus.

I also did elicitation on a sample of 460 verbs—checking for each item whether it could be used intransitively and transitively, with what transitive endings, their meanings (and metaphorical extensions), case frames, and possible complement types. Results of this study are summarised in §18.2–4 and §23.3. The rich set of data obtained from this elicitation was also, of course, invaluable material for other parts of the grammatical study.

I heard Fijian spoken around me in Waitabu, and used it for almost all communication with villagers. What people said to me, and what I heard them say to each other, was another important data source. People would correct me when I did not speak quite grammatically or idiomatically, and these adjustments were also invaluable input to the analytic task.

I have *not* tried to describe the oldest and most conservative Boumaa speech (which would have involved asking the oldest people to speak in the way that their parents did, and basing my grammar entirely on this corpus). Many features that were originally distinctive for Boumaa (and, in some cases, for neighbouring dialects) have been lost from everyday conversation and replaced by a word or construction from the standard dialect (V). My aim has been to describe the language as it is used, today, in Waitabu village. (Just a few archaic features that are of particular linguistic interest are mentioned in the grammar, e.g. the negative *cau* in §23.4.)

Before going into the field, then again while living at Waitabu, and once more while writing this book, I consulted everything previously produced on Fijian grammar. I do owe a considerable debt to the works of Horatio Hale, David Hazlewood, C. M. Churchward, A. Capell, George Milner, David Arms, Andrew Pawley, Paul Geraghty, Albert J. Schütz, and others (see the Appendix).

This grammar is far from complete, either in the sense that an exhaustive description is given of the behaviour of each grammatical element, or in the sense that an exhaustive list is given of lexemes that have a certain property (verbs taking a *me* complement, for instance, or adjectives accepting the *va'a-* prefix). To have attempted the former task would have involved much more research and made the book huge and less accessible. And, concerning the latter task, work has been proceeding for about fifteen years on a Monolingual Fijian Dictionary, which when completed will hopefully contain full data on the grammatical properties of each lexeme.

Two long texts (nos. 4 and 6) and one village announcement (8a) are included at the end of the volume. Extensive reference is made to them (by T followed by text and sentence number). The reader is urged to follow up these references, in order gradually to build up a picture of how the elements of Fijian grammar interrelate.

For many grammatical problems, in Fijian as in other languages, I do not believe that there is any "unique solution." For instance, numbers could be described as a distinct word class, closely similar to verbs, or as a divergent subclass of verbs; *via* "want to, need to," might be regarded as a verbal prefix or as a syntactic modifier; and so on. I have tried to use explicit criteria, and to apply these consistently, in order to produce a coherent description of the main grammatical patterns of Fijian. But others might prefer a different methodology, which would yield rather different results.

My aim has been to present the main points of Boumaa grammar in a clear way for a general linguist who wishes to know how the language works. Particular attention is paid to syntax partly because this has not been dealt with at any length in previous grammars of varieties of Fijian.

2 Phonology

2.1 Consonants

The Boumaa (B) dialect of Fijian has 20 consonants; three of them (*k*, *f* and *j*) have restricted occurrence. Table 2.1 sets these out, in terms of the standard orthography which was devised by the early missionaries and has been in use ever since; it includes just one digraph, "dr" for the prenasalised trill. Phonetic values in terms of the International Phonetic Alphabet are placed in square brackets where they differ from the orthographic symbol. For the glottal stop a vertical stroke (') is employed, as in the regular alphabets of Tongan, Samoan, and Rotuman, with an apostrophe used when a vertical stroke is unavailable. This symbol has the disadvantage of not having a capital form; for a noun beginning with a glottal stop the second letter has to be capitalised e.g. the village of 'Orovou.

/t/ and /d/ show the greatest allomorphic variation—they are realised as affricates [tʃ] and [^{n}dʒ] before /i/ but always as just [t], [^{n}d] before /e/, /a/, /o/ and /u/. The semi-vowel /w/ involves the back of the tongue being raised towards the soft palate but this is not accompanied by significant lip-rounding. The lateral /l/ has a clear quality before front vowels but is darker before back vowels. (Fuller information on phonetic realisations for the related V dialect is in Scott 1948.)

Both semi-vowels have restricted occurrence. /w/ occurs contrastively only after /a/, /i/ and /e/. A phonetic [w] is often pronounced between a back vowel and a following vowel, but is not contrastive in this position, e.g. [kaukauwa]~[kaukaua], phonemically /kaukaua/ "strong". /y/ appears to be restricted to occurrence before /a/. /y/ is only optionally pronounced at the beginning of lexemes; /yalewa/ "woman" can be [yalewa] but more often just [alewa]. Nevertheless, /y/ does have phonemic status—it can never be omitted from the B demonstratives /yai/ "here", /yaa/ "that (mid-distance)", and /mayaa/ "that (far)"; and the fact that [ya] is not a morpheme-initial variant of /a/ can be seen from the distinct transitive suffixes *-ya* and *-a*, e.g. *ta-ya* "cut-TR" and *vana-a* "shoot-TR" (see also Biggs and Nayacakalou 1958:81 and Geraghty 1983:67–8).

The consonant inventory in Standard Fijian (V) differs from that of B in the following ways: (i) there is no glottal stop; (ii) *k* is a central member of the system; (iii) *p* has a low functional load (like *f* and *j*), occurring mostly in loans.

I have noted about 70 words in B that include *p*, showing that is has a fair functional load, although less than those of the other stop consonants. About one-third of my examples are loans from English, such as *pouta* "talcum powder", *toopoi* "doughboy", *Peritaania* "Britain". Boumaa is geographically quite close to Tonga, whose language does have phonemic /p/, but only

TABLE 2.1 CONSONANT PHONEMES

	bilabial	labio-dental	apico-dental	apico-alveolar	dorso-velar	glottal
nasal	m		n		g[ŋ]	
voiceless stop	p		t		k	'[ʔ]
prenasalised stop	b[^{m}b]		d[^{n}d]		q[^{ŋ}g]	
trill				r		
prenasalised trill				dr[^{n}r]		
voiced fricative	v[β]		c[ð]			
voiceless fricative		f		s		
affricate				j[tʃ, dʒ]		
lateral				l		
semi-vowel				y[j]	w	

about 15 items from my p-corpus can be recognised as Tongan loans, e.g. *pito* "navel", *pato* "duck". Half of the B words with *p* appear *not* to be loans—forms like *pono* "to catch an animal" and *pu'u* "angry". Geraghty 1983:98–120 has a detailed and insightful discussion of *p* across the dialects of Fijian, concluding that there was a *p* in earlier historical stages; the B data support his conclusion.

There are three consonants in B that have restricted occurrence: *k*, *f*, and *j*.

(1) *k*. This sound is extremely common in V (a dialect which every speaker of B has greater or lesser familiarity with) but in most words B has a glottal stop in place of *k*, e.g. V *butako*, B *buta'o* "steal".

There are, however, a number of B words that do show *k*:

(i) Most English loans e.g. *suka* "sugar", *motokaa* "car", *kaloko* "clock" are never pronounced with a glottal stop; but note *tapa'o* "tobacco" (a very early loan), which generally is.

(ii) A number of words borrowed in recent times from the V dialect are sometimes pronounced with a *k*, and sometimes not. Thus *mata'a*~*mataka* "morning" (originally *saubogi* in B), *ya'avi*~*yakavi* "evening" (originally *yavi* in B), *kece*~*'ece* "all" (see §8.3.7). In other loans from V, a *k* is invariably retained e.g. *kama(-ca)* "to burn" (originally *'ati-a* and *udre(-va)* in B).

(iii) There seems to be a preference *not* to have *two* glottal stops in successive syllables of a single word, and if a V form has two *k*'s then both may be retained in B, e.g. *kaukaua* "strong, hard", *kaka* "to stammer", *kaukamea* "metal", *kaki* "to scrape skin (e.g. off a breadfruit)"; the B form *'aa'ana* "food" appears to be an exception, but this is in fact historically a compound of *'aa* "thing" and *'ana* "to eat" ("thing for eating").

We see that although most *k*'s in V are replaced by ' in B, the phoneme /k/ does still have a place in the B phonemic system.

(2) *f*. I have noted only a dozen B words with /f/, which is, interestingly

enough, always given labio-dental articulation—in contrast to /v/, which is in Fijian a bilabial fricative. Half are loans from English, probably via Tongan (which does have a /f/ phoneme) e.g. *faele* "file", *fika* "arithmetic" (from *figure*), *falawa* "flour". Most of the remainder appear to be loans from Tongan itself, e.g. *fua* "elephantiasis". /f/ has probably been introduced into the B consonant inventory recently and has a rather peripheral status within it.

(3) *j*. In V, /t/ is pronounced as an alveolar stop before all vowels; there is also a voiceless alveolar affricate, written *j*, that occurs in just a few loans, e.g. *jiaina* "banana" (from *China*), *Jone* "John". In B, /t/ has the allophone [tʃ] before /i/ e.g. V [tiko], B [tʃi'o] "stay, reside". A literate speaker of B told me that [tʃiaina] "banana" should in his dialect be written *tiaina*, i.e. he perceived the initial [tʃ] in terms of the phoneme /t/. There are, however, a few loan words in which [tʃ] (or [dʒ]) is followed by a vowel other than /i/—*Jone* [tʃone] "John"; *Josefa* [tʃosefa] "Joseph"; and *va'a-jaabolo* [va'a-dʒaa^{m}bolo] "naked, heathen" (based on the Greek word *diabolos* "devil", used by the early missionaries for those Fijians who had not yet embraced both the European god and European-style clothing—note that an original sequence *di-* has become [dʒ] in this loan). It seems that in addition to [tʃ] as an allophone of /t/ before /i/ and [^{n}dʒ] as an allophone of /d/ before /i/, we should also recognise a phoneme /j/ in B, with realisation [tʃ] or [dʒ], that has a highly marginal status.

2.2 Vowels and diphthongs

Like V, the B dialect has a five-vowel system:

	front unrounded			back rounded
high	i			u
mid		e	o	
low		a		

The vowel /u/ is well rounded and /o/ partly rounded. /e/ spans cardinal vowels [e] and [ɛ], while /o/ covers [o] and [ɔ]. /a/ is closer to cardinal 4, [a] than to cardinal 5, [ɑ]. Vowels are often devoiced in word-final position.

All five vowels can occur in lengthened form, without significant difference in phonetic quality; a syllable involving a long vowel is always stressed. Long vowels are not marked in written Fijian, that is, in newspapers, books (including the Bible and school books), or government documents. Grammarians such as Milner (1956) and Schütz and Komaitai (1971) generally show length by a bar over the vowel—*ā*, *ū*, etc. Since the bar notation has most definitely *not* caught on, and since vowel length certainly *should* be marked, I follow here the suggestion of Biggs and Nayacakalou (1958) by writing a long vowel as a sequence of two short vowel symbols: thus *vana* "shoot" versus *vana-a* "shoot-TR", and *matau* "stone axe" versus *maatau* "accustomed".

There are seven diphthongs in Fijian. Six begin with a non-high vowel and finish with a high one—*ai, au; ei, eu; oi, ou;* the peak of the syllable is on the first member, with the second part providing something like an off-glide. The realisations of the first elements of these diphthongs are raised from their normal position of articulation, to assimilate towards the second element—/au/ can be [ɔ^u] and /ou/ can be [o^u] (whereas plain /o/ between consonants, is often realised as [ɔ]). Diphthongs commencing with *a* are the commonest, e.g. *wai* "water", *maarau* "happy", although there are also a far number commencing with mid-vowels, e.g. *dreu* "ripe", *taalei* "precious", *pulou* "to be covered", *voivoi* "pandanus".

The other diphthong is *iu;* here the second element is the syllabic peak with the *i* being realised partly as palatalisation of the preceding consonant and partly as an on-glide—thus /niu/, [ɲ^{i}u]. I only noted four occurrences of *iu:* three are in words that occur very frequently, *niu* "coconut", *biu* "to be placed, left," and *liu* "lead", and the fourth is in the placename *Viubani*. (Capell's dictionary also has *ciu, driu* and *siu* but these were not recognised by speakers of B).

2.3 Phonotactics

A syllable in B has the form CV or V, where C represents any consonant (note that all consonants can occur both word-initially and word-medially) and V is a short vowel, a long vowel, or a diphthong.

It appears that the only words which include a consonant and begin with a long vowel are loans from English, e.g. *aapolo* "apple" (many trisyllabic loans have, as in this word, a long vowel in the first syllable so that this syllable may carry stress, as it does in English). I know of no word that includes a consonant and begins with a diphthong. There are, however, some words that consist *just* of a long vowel or diphthong, e.g. *oo* "cloud" past tense *aa*, 1sg subject marker *au*, and some interjections such as *oi* "really" (see §22.6).

Not very many words begin with a short vowel. Initial *u* is most common (about 80 items in Capell's dictionary) followed by *o* (65), *i* (40), *a* (20), and *e* (15). (Note that the dictionary lists, on average, more than 300 words beginning with each consonant.)

No word has a long vowel in the penultimate syllable where the final syllable has a short vowel. There are, however, some diphthongs in this position, e.g. *pulou-na* "cover-TR". (Schmidt, 1988, describes how a phonetically lengthened penultimate vowel is an indexical feature of women's speech in Waitabu.)

It is common to encounter a sequence of two vowels within a Fijian word. The twenty possibilities fall into three distinct types.

(1) if *a, e,* or *o* is followed by *i* or *u*, or if *i* is followed by *u*, within a phonological word, then these vowel sequences always constitute a diphthong (that is, they belong to one syllable). However, if any of these vowel sequences occurs across a phonological word boundary, then the two vowels will belong to different syllables. We now illustrate this, using "." for a phonological word boundary and "=" for a syllable boundary.

A reduplication boundary is always a phonological word boundary; thus