ABSTRACT

This thesis describes the morphosyntax of Kewapi dialect of Kewa, a language of the West-Central (Engan) Family of the Trans New Guinea Phylum. Chapter 1 introduces the language, providing some basic information about dialect variation and about the geographic, demographic and sociocultural setting. It concludes with an outline of previous studies of Kewa and of the aim and scope of the present study.

In chapter 2 some aspects of the phonology of Kewapi are outlined to accompany the grammatical descriptions in chapters 3 to 8. Consonant and vowel phonemes are presented. Suprasegmental elements of stress and tone as described by the Franklins (1962, 1978) are briefly reviewed. Phonemic and orthographic conventions proposed by Karl Franklin (1992) are adopted for the present study.

The main task of chapter 3 is to sketch the morphosyntactic character of Kewapi. It presents an overview of the basic clause structure, deals with head-marking and dependent-marking morphosyntax, establishes word classes and distinguishes words, clitics and affixes.

Chapter 4 provides a detailed description of Kewapi clause level grammar. The grammatical relations subject, object and oblique are defined. Four grammatical mood clause types - declarative, imperative, subjunctive and interrogative - are distinguished. A morphophonemic account is given for the occurrence of two sets of subject-tense suffixes in declarative clauses. Verbs are classified according to their transitivity features. The chapter concludes with a description of predicate types: serial predicates, be predicates (or predicate nominal/adjectives) verb-less and realis predicates.

Chapter 5 presents fairly detailed description of descriptive, possessive and adverbial noun phrases, followed by a brief account of the formation of noun-noun, verb-noun and noun-adjective compounds and of categories of noun. The chapter concludes with a description of the types and grammatical functions of nominalisations.

Chapter 6 focuses on the structure of verbs and verb phrases in independent
declarative and imperative clauses. Verbal categories of negation, causation, direction, split-action, aspect, tense, subject, evidence and speech act are identified and systematised. Finally the chapter describes 'auxiliary verb phrases'. Subordinate clauses - those that function as noun phrases (complement clauses), those which function as modifiers of nouns (relative clauses), and those which function as modifiers of verb phrases and clauses (adverbial subordinate clauses)- are dealt with in chapter 7. Complement clauses are predominantly object complement clauses. Relative clauses are predominantly prenominal relative clauses. Kewapi has five reason subordinators that are in complementary distribution. There are five semantic types of conditional clauses: Real, Unreal (hypothetical and counterfactual), Predictive and Concessive. The chapter concludes with a discussion of non-finite subordinate clauses, namely purpose and desiderative subordinate types. The final chapter describes types of coordinate construction. Kewapi has coordinate independent and coordinate dependent constructions. The latter has two subtypes: (a) those that are not marked by verbal suffixes and (b) those that are marked by verbal suffixes, namely, same subject (SS) and different subject (DS) suffixes. The description of interclausal reference in Franklin (1971, 1983) and Y arapea (2001) is reviewed. It is argued that in Kewapi a true switch-reference construction is one in which the coordinate dependent verb carries a subject suffix (which functions as a switch-reference marker) and is temporally or aspectually linked to a final clause.