

Elderly Palauans' Japanese competence: Observations from their predicate forms

Masumi Kai
University of Guam

Abstract: In this paper I examine the Japanese spoken by elderly Palauans who received an education in Japanese before 1945. The discussion unfolds based on interview data from five subjects. Elderly Palauans still maintain the Japanese language. They can produce complicated sentences like complex and compound sentences; however, there are several characteristics of their Japanese which are different from those of native Japanese speakers. (1) The subjects use the plain form more often than the polite form. The most frequently used predicate type in the plain form is a noun without a sentence final element (SFE). Many of them have a short intonation unit or simplified structures. (2) The subjects used sentence-ending particles *ne* and *yo* in the plain form during our first meeting. Most of the *ne*-ending sentences do not sound unnatural, but *yo*-ending sentences do. This suggests that a sufficient command of *yo* is more difficult to acquire than *ne*. (3) Some of the subjects who did not have many opportunities to speak Japanese after 1945 did not exploit the conversational strategies fulfilled by SFE. Their bare predicates sounded abrupt and unnatural. However, utterances that have longer IU, compound and complex structure, and mixture of predicate forms become natural even if they are plain form predicates without a SFE.

Key words: Palau, colonial education, *kogakko*, predicate form, sentence final element

1. Introduction

Palau is a beautiful island nation located 3,200 km south of Tokyo in the Pacific Ocean. Its size is 458 km², and its population totaled 20,700 as of 2008¹. Palau is divided into sixteen states. More than 60% of Palauans live in Koror State's capital city, Koror.

Palau was a Japanese colony for 31 years after 1914. During that period, education was conducted in the Japanese language. Palau is currently an independent country and their official languages are English and Palauan. There are, however, still



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many elderly people who maintain Japanese. This paper analyzes the characteristics of Japanese spoken by five elderly Palauans, with a special focus on their predicate form usage and language competence.

2. Historical and Educational Background

The Japanese Navy seized Germany's possessions in the Marianas, Carolines, Marshall Islands and Palau groups in 1914. The headquarters of the South Pacific Mandate (*Nanyo-cho*) was established in Palau in 1922. Palau was a center of Japanese administration in the South Sea Islands.

According to Yanaihara (1935:46-49), the number of Japanese people in the South Sea Islands was only 70 to 80 in 1914, but grew to over 30,670 out of a total population of 80,884 in 1933². The Japanese South Sea islands population ballooned to about 84,000 in 1935, of which 23,000 were living in Palau³. People from Okinawa were the most numerous, followed by people from Tokyo (mainly from the Ogasawara Islands and Hachijo-jima) and Fukushima⁴. Tomiyama (1993:54-65) and Matsumoto (2000a:90) state that marriage between Japanese and Palauans was promoted in Palau. One of our subjects was a child of such a case.

Hygiene was insufficient and infant mortality was high⁵. The Japanese government undertook the building of hospitals to improve islanders' health and hygiene and also promoted elementary education since 1915. At first, rudimentary education was carried out by garrison troops, Nanyoo trade employees, and local teachers from the German territory era (Miyawaki 2006:9).

Education in the South Sea Islands is divided into three periods: December 1914 to June 1918, July 1918 to March 1922, and April 1922 to August 1945. During the first period, four-year elementary schools (*shogakko*) were inaugurated for eight to twelve year old children. In the second period, it became a three-year education (*tomin-gakko*). In the third period, three-year *kogakko* plus two-year supplemental schools (*hoshuka*) were established which targeted children over eight years old⁶ (Miyawaki 2006:9-10). Similar to other Japanese colonies like Taiwan and Korea, education for Japanese children and local children were separated⁷. According to Sudo (2003:185,189), the *kogakko* enrollment rate exceeded 50% in the entire South Sea Islands by 1935, and it reached almost 100% in Palau⁸. Children who performed well could proceed to *hoshuka*. Those children worked



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for Japanese people after school. Boys worked as loading laborers, farm laborers, and shop helpers. Girls worked as nursing aids, Japanese household maids, and shop assistants. After completion of *hoshuka*, some male students could enter carpentry apprentice training school (*mokko totei yoseijo*). However, unlike in Taiwan and Korea, the opportunity to receive higher education beyond supplemental school or to study in Japan was rare at that time.

Islander children learned ethics, history, geography, science, literature, civics, and the like in *kogakko* (The-Mainichi-Newspapers 1978:178, Sudo 2003:184, Kawamura 1994:14, Miyawaki 2006:18). Just as it was in Taiwan and Korea, elementary educators used *Kokugo-dokuhon* as the textbook. It adopted the unification of the written and spoken language style. Replication of the textbook compiled by Miyawaki (2006) shows that textbooks used *katakana* to gradually introduce *hiragana*⁹. The subjects were Japanese old folks, the Imperial Family, Japanese culture and the like (Kawamura 1994:18).

3. Methodology and Subjects' Background

The data in this paper was collected from interviews in July 2010. The number of interviewees is five, and all received a Japanese education before 1945.

There are two types of research methodology: quantitative research and qualitative research. The former gathers data from a volume of people, explores the tendency of that group, and seeks empirical support for the hypothesis. The latter aims to obtain detailed descriptions in natural settings and produces information on the particular case studied. Interviewees who received a Japanese education before WWII are all more than 77 years old and most of them (especially in the South Sea Islands) can only read *katakana* and some *hiragana*. It is not feasible and reliable to conduct experimental research by using a test or a questionnaire on these people. It is also the aim of this paper is to analyze their natural utterances. For these reasons this paper employs the qualitative research methodology.

Subjects were found through the assistance of a director of education administration



Nanyogunto Kokugo-dokuhon kan 2 (1917)

in Palau. Each interview was held for 30 minutes to an hour, and a 30 minute segment from each interview was extracted and analyzed. The interviews commenced by getting the subject's ethnographic information and then asking for stories about school and daily life before 1945 and Japanese usage after 1945. The data was recorded by a Sony DAT recorder with a video camera as a supplement.

There is no period placed in natural utterances, so the definition of a 'sentence' is debatable. This paper employs the notion of an 'intonation unit' proposed by Chafe (1987, 1994) and Du Bois et. al (1992). According to Chafe (1987, 1994), an intonation unit (IU) is a speech unit that has an association with a coherent intonation contour. The criteria of delimitation of an IU are (1) pause, (2) final syllable lengthening or slow speech rate at the end of an IU, (3) fast speech rate at the beginning of the next IU, and (4) pitch reset. The utterances in the data are divided by IU units. Transcriptions were made based on Du Bois et al (1992, 1993) (see Appendix for abbreviations).

The background information of the subjects is illustrated below.

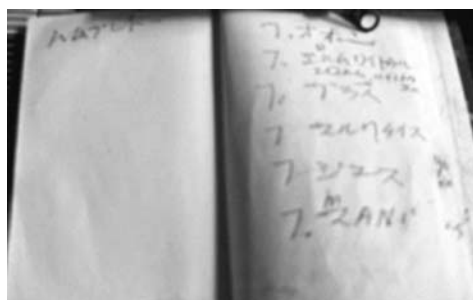
Table 1: Subjects' Background¹⁰

	ID	Sex	Birth year	Age at interview	Years of Education	Job after graduating from school	Contact with Japanese after 1945
1	UCH	F	1925 (<i>Taisho 14</i>)	85	5 years	worked for Japanese family	sometimes used Japanese words when talking with husband when he was alive. worked at the duty free shop in Guam for a while and spoke with Japanese tourists.
2	ANT	F	1929 (<i>Showa 4</i>)	81	5 years	worked for Japanese family. worked as an assistant nurse between age 13 to 15.	took care of Japanese memorial missions who came to Palau to collect Japanese soldiers' remains. goes to a church and looks at a Japanese bible at church.
3	URI	M	1928 (<i>Showa 3</i>)	82	3 years	became a carpenter	there is a Japanese woman who married a Palauan in the neighborhood.
4	MAR	M	1933 (<i>Showa 8</i>)	77	3 years	entered middle school after 1945. became an electric technician.	there was a Japanese carpenter who stayed in his house for a while. sometimes talked with Japanese tourists. often listens to Japanese enka on the radio.
5	FUM	F	1931 (<i>Showa 6</i>)	79	5 years	became a teacher for a while, did some business, opened a Japanese restaurant	visited relatives in Okinawa. owns a restaurant and talk with Japanese guests.

4. Discussion

4-1. Overall characteristics of elderly Palauans' Japanese

There are several studies that discuss the Japanese language in the South Sea Islands (Shibuya 1995ab, 1997, Yui 1998b, 2000, Miyawaki 1995, etc.). Some researchers mention the fluency of Japanese spoken by elderly Palauans. Most of the languages in the South Sea Islands do not have an established written system, therefore it is said that some elderly people use *katakana* when writing to people in other islands (Yui 2000:136, Yui 2002:243, Matsumoto 2000b:176). At the election in Palau in 1992 and 1997, alphabets and *katakana* were used for a ballot (Matsumoto 2000a:90). It is surprising to know that Palau people still remember Japanese after the 65 years that have passed since the Japanese administration ended in the South Sea Islands. Kai (2007, 2008) explored the Japanese language spoken by elderly Taiwanese. Kai (2010) examined Japanese used by elderly Yap people. One of the remarkable and common characteristics among those people (including Palauans) who finished *kogakko* is that they are generally able to speak Japanese for a great length of time without needing an obvious pause or hesitation to think of grammar. A pause is normally seen from beginners or intermediate level Japanese language learners. During the interview, Palauan subjects exhibited Japanese language ability sufficient to carry on a conversation. Evidence that attests to the Palauans' good language competence is sentence type. Subjects not only produced simple sentences, but could also produce complex and compound sentences. The table below shows types of complex and compound sentences used by them.



Practice notebook of Japanese written by one of the subjects.

Table 2: Complex and Compound Sentences

	RC	NOM	-te	ka ra	ta ra	ta ri	ke do	to ki	te mo	to (condition)	to/te (quotation)	others	Total
UCH	25	10	83	8	11	19	13	7	1	2	7	20 <i>node</i> (5), <i>keredomo</i> (1), <i>ka</i> (2), <i>koro</i> (3), <i>made</i> <i>wa</i> (1), <i>ba'ai</i> (1)	206 (17 type)
ANT	13	4	49	7	8	4	9	10	1	2	3	18 <i>node</i> (1), <i>te kara</i> (1), <i>ka</i> (1), <i>ato</i> (1), <i>shi</i> (7), <i>ba</i> (1), <i>aida ni</i> (2), <i>renyo-</i> <i>form</i> (1)	128 (19 type)
URI	4	2	12	4	2	1	1	1	3	1	-	3 <i>keredomo</i> (1), <i>tekara</i> (1), <i>ga</i> (1),	34 (13 type)
MAR	2	-	35	6	11	-	2	5	-	-	-	1 <i>tekara</i> (1)	62 (7 type)
FUM	30	14	42	5	-	1	9	2	-	5	11	31 <i>no ka</i> (2), <i>nagara</i> (3), <i>tanbini</i> (2), <i>ba</i> (5), <i>ka</i> (1), <i>shi</i> (3), <i>koro</i> (4)	150 (16 type)

*RC = Relative Clause, NOM = nominalization by *no/koto* + particle

The most frequently used type is the conjunctive postpositional particle *te*. Simple connection of more than two clauses by *te*-form is usually acquired by Japanese language learners at the early stage of learning. On the other hand, relative clause and nominalization are harder to acquire because these complex clauses are prenominal (different from many other languages) and it is embedded in a sentence. The table shows, however, that subjects can produce a variety of complex and compound sentences.

Palauans seemed to retain a relatively good Japanese language competence. But how high is their Japanese proficiency level? In their Japanese, there are still some grammatical errors like tense, word choice, voice, as well as some deviations. One of the deviations is a distinct usage of the predicate form. In the following sections, I shall examine their predicate forms and factors that cause their utterances to sound unnatural. I will also discuss their language competence.

4-2. Predicate form

In Japanese, there are two predicate forms: the plain form and the polite form¹¹. In a nutshell, the former is used for conversations in casual relationships and also in writing. The latter is used in conversations with superiors and in formal situations. Basically native Japanese speakers choose one of the forms depending on the social relationship with the hearer. Table 3 and graph 1 below show predicate forms used by subjects.

Table 3: Predicate Form

ID	Sex	Plain Form				Polite Form			
		Noun	Adjective	Verb	Sub Total	Noun	Adjective	Verb	Sub Total
UCH	F	91 (37.4%)	5 (2.1%)	75 (30.9%)	171 (70.4%)	8 (3.3%)	1 (0.4%)	63 (25.9%)	71 (29.6%)
ANT	F	67 (31.8%)	6 (2.8%)	133 (63.0%)	206 (97.6%)	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.5%)	3 (1.4%)	5 (2.4%)
URI	M	107 (43.7%)	35 (14.3%)	84 (34.3%)	226 (92.2%)	1 (0.4%)	-	18 (7.3%)	20 (7.8%)
MAR	M	117 (46.4%)	6 (2.4%)	114 (45.2%)	237 (94.0%)	5 (2.0%)	-	10 (4.0%)	15 (6.0%)
FUM	F	98 (45.2%)	16 (7.4%)	64 (29.5%)	178 (82.0%)	6 (2.8%)	-	33 (15.2%)	38 (18.0%)

Graph 1: Predicate Form

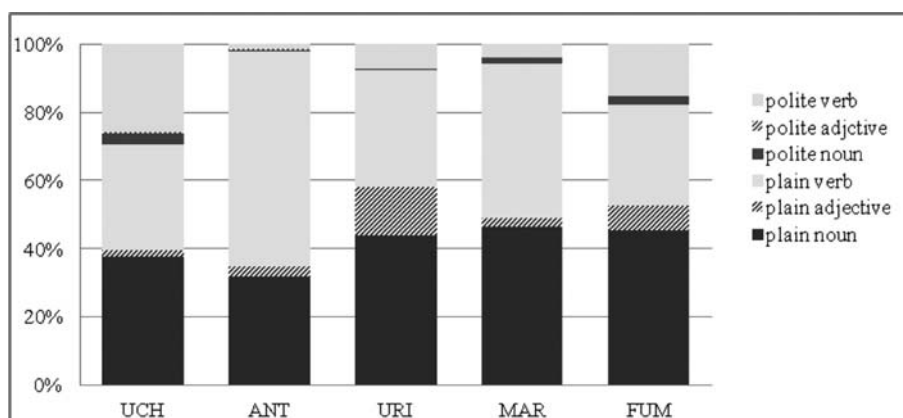


Table 3 and graph 1 show that all our Palauan subjects used both the plain form and the polite form, but the former was used more than the latter.

Shibuya (1997, 2003) interviewed five elderly Palauans and asserts that there are two groups with respect to the usage of predicate forms. He states that one group (three subjects) used many polite forms, but the other group (two subjects) mainly used the plain form. Looking at his data, one informant out of three in the first group used the polite form more often than the plain form. The other two, however, used the polite form but still used the plain form more often. So actually, the majority of his subjects used the plain form more frequently. Based on Shibuya's result and the result in this paper I conjecture that the majority of Palauans use the plain form oftentimes, even for a first-time conversation¹², whereas Japanese native speakers usually opt to use the polite form in that context.

Previously I stated that Japanese native speakers basically choose one of the forms depending on the social relationship with the hearer. Yet it is known that native

Japanese speakers sometimes changes between the polite form and the plain form in both conversation and writing. This is called ‘speech level shift’. Speech level shift does not occur at random. It takes place as a result of the speaker’s psychological attitude and discourse development (Kindaichi 1982, Ikuta & Ide 1983, Maynard 1991, 1992, Noda 1998). Previous research has pointed out that Japanese language learners have difficulty maintaining the speech level and that they mix the plain form incorrectly in polite form based conversations (Maynard 1991, 1992, Mimaki 1993, 2007, Chen 2005). Mimaki (2007) states that it is conspicuous that the speech level observed in beginners and intermediate level learners is not clear when they are in contact with Japanese native speakers.

The subjects met the interviewer for the first time on the day of the interview. An interview is a formal situation. In this context the polite form may be preferred; however, the subjects are all older than the interviewer so it would not be technically wrong to use the plain form. The focus of the discussion is in how the subjects used the plain form. Also at issue is if any predicates contain a sentence final element (SFE).

Table 3 and graph1 shown previously illustrate that the plain form was used with a noun most often (except in the case of one subject ANT¹³) and the second most often occurring situation was with a verb. IU of many noun plain-form predicates is short: many of them are one word sentences or have a simplified structure as seen below.

(1) <Ask about UCH’s educational background.>

- 1 KAI: ano=, .. Nihon-go wa=, nan-nen-kan benkyooshi-ta-n desu ka/?
DM Japanese-language TOP how-many-years study-PAST-NOM COP Q
Well... how long did you study Japanese?
- 2 UCH: (TSK) go-nen-kan.
five-years-duration
For five years.
- 3 KAI: <P>fu==n/</P>.. doko de/?
DM where LOC
I see.. At where?
- 4 UCH: Korooru de.
LOC
In Koror.
- 5 KAI: Koro=ru de.. Korooru no, .. koogakkoo ni it-ta-n [desu ka]?
LOC GEN DIR go-PAST-NOM COP Q
In Koror... Did you go to the kogakko in Koror?
- 6 UCH: [koogak] koo to
and
→ shooga%, koogakkoo to fuchuuka. koogakkoo ga,
and general-education-curriculum SUB
Kogakko and, kogakko and general education curriculum. Kogakko was,
- 7 KAI: un.
DM
- 8 UCH: san-nen-kan.
three-year-duration
for three years.

- 9 KAI: <PP>un</PP>.
DM
- 10 UCH: de e= hoshuuka ga ni-nen-kan.
and DM supplemental:course SUG two-year-duration
And supplemental course was for two years.
- 11 KAI: fu=/n. nan-sai kara nan-sai made desu ka/?
DM what-age from what-age till COP Q
I see. From what age to what age?
- 12 UCH: sore=de ano=, a=, .. itsumo has-sai kara kyuu-sai.
and:then DM DM always eight-age from nine-age
And then, well, always from eight to nine years old.

(2) <Ask MAR if they can soybean paste in Palau.>

- 1 KAI: miso wa kau koto ga dekimasu ka/, ut-temasu [ka]?
soybean:paste TOP buy NOM SUB do:can Q sell-ing Q
Can you buy soybean paste, does store sell it?
- 2 MAR: [DM well
- shopping.
shopping
Well, shopping (center).

(3) <Ask URI if he had many chance to talk with Japanese people besides teacher.>

- 1 KAI: .. (H) Nihon-jidai ni=, Nihon-jin to hanashi o=, .. takusan shimashi-
Japanese-period during Japanese-people with talk OBJ many do-
ta ka/?
PAST Q
Did you talk with Japanese people a lot during the Japanese period?
- 2 URI: n un. tottemo takusan.
DM yes very much
Yes. A lot.
- 3 KAI: ha=n.. n de dare to=--.. sensee, .. sensee to Nihon-go de hanashi o
DM DM then who with teacher teacher with Japanese-language INS talk OBJ
shimasu yo ne= [hoka]ni wa dare to Nihon-go de hanashi o shimashi-
do SP SP other TOP who with Japanese-language INS talk OBJ do-
ta ka/?
PAST Q
Well.. With whom.. You talked with your teacher in Japanese, right. Who else did you talk in Japanese?
- 4 URI: [un].
DM
- 5 URI: un a= hoka no=, .. Nihon-jin.
well DM other of Japanese-people
Well, other Japanese people.

The noun plain-form predicates above are acceptable, but sound a little reticent or abrupt. Observe the following examples. These are adjectives and verb plain-form predicates.

(4) <ANT talks about agriculture in Palau just after WWII.>

- 1 ANT: sore kara= minna dandanto=, (H) o=, .. u=n hi% hi ga tat-tekara=, (H)
then after everyone gradually DM DM day SUB past-and:then
→ dandanto tsu%, na tsuchi ga waru% e yoku naru =.
gradually DM soil SUB DM better become
And then gradually, well, after passing days, the soil gradually gets better.
- 2 KAI: un.
DM

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- 3 ANT: dakara minna= a ano=, tapioca toka=, sono=, <#>gamutii</#> o=, .. u%
 therefore everyone DM DM tapioca and DM OBJ
 → ueru=.
 plant
So, people plan tapioca and gamti.
- 4 ANT: de[mo] anmari <E>soil</E> yoku-nai.
 but not:much good-NEG
But the soil is not so good.
- 5 KAI: [<P>un</P>].
 DM
- 6 KAI: u==[2n2].
 DM
- 7 ANT: [2tsu2]chi ga warui.
 soil SUB bad
Soil is bad.

(5) <Ask MAR if he could watch Japanese TV after WWII.>

- 1 KAI: sensoo ga owat-ta ato wa=, .. tokidoki Nihon-jin to hanashi o suru
 war SUB end-PAST after TOP sometimes Japanese-people with talk OBJ do
 dake desu ka/, [Ni]hon no terebi toka= miru koto ga deki-mase-n ka?
 only COP Q Japan GEN TV and:the:like watch NOM SUB can:do-NEG-NOM Q
After the WWII, you talked with Japanese only occasionally? Can't you watch Japanese TV shows?
- 2 MAR: [e\].
 DM
- 3 MAR: wei. shi=to%, <#>syo</#> no toki wa na-katta. iya, terebi wa ima\
 DM of time TOP no:exist-PAST DM TV TOP now
Well, (we) did not have it during the period of <#>sho</#>. No, TV is now.
- 4 KAI: arimasu/?
 there:is
There is (TV)?
- 5 MAR: ima\ de mu%, .. mukashi wa=, .. sensoo at-ta toki ni nai. na-katta.
 now and old:time TOP war have-PAST time at no:exist no:exist-PAST
 → (H)=, terebi/, rajio na-katta.
 TV radio no:exist-PAST
Now, Then, before, (we) did not have (TV) during the WWII. (We) did not have. There were not TV and radio.
- 6 KAI: <P>a\
 DM
- 7 MAR: .. ima=, .. aru. terebi to rajio ga aru.
 now exist TV and radio SUB exist
Now... (we) have. (We) have TV and radio
- 8 KAI: <P>ha\
 DM
- 9 MAR: .. sono toki wa na-katta.
 that time TOP no:exist:PAST
(We) did not have (them) at that time.
- 10 KAI: <PP>fu[=n</PP>].
 DM
- 11 MAR: [u]=n.
 DM
- 12 MAR: .. rajio wa daitai s=en, .. (.4) sen-kyu%, .. sen-kyuuhyaku-
 radio TOP almost one:thousand one:thousand-nine one:thousand-nine:hundred-
 → nanajuu=, .. nan-nen, rajio ga, .. <PP>deki-ta</PP>.
 seventy some-year radio SUB make-PAST
Radio was around 1970 something, radio was made.

(6) <URI says that there many outer islands in Palau.>

- 1 KAI: soko no sima no hito-tachi, .. soko no, .. tooi shima no naka ni wa
 there of island GEN person-PL there of far island of inside LOC TOP
 gakkoo wa aru-n de[su ka]?
 school TOP exist-NOM COP Q
People in that island... that place... is there a school in far island?

- 2 URI: [nai].
no:exist
There isn't.
- 3 KAI: <AS>nai</AS>.
no:exist
There isn't (a school).
- 4 URI: (0) mae wa at-ta-n dakedomo= minna koko ki-ta.
before TOP exist-PAST-NOM although everyone here com-PAST
There used to be, but everyone came here.
- 5 KAI: ha\n.
DM
- 6 URI: mukoo ni iru=, .. hito wa futatsu% a futari ka= san-nin. futari a=
over:there LOC stay people TOP two DM two:people or three-people two:people DM
hitori a=, .. no shima.
one:person DM of island
People over there are just two or three. Island with two or one person.
- 7 KAI: <P>hai</P>.
DM
- 8 URI: .. mo anmari= soko ni=, .. hito ga suma-nai.
anymore not:much there LOC person SUB live-NEG
Not many people live there anymore.

These plain-form predicates sound abrupt and unnatural. This seems to be caused by their use with bare predicates, viz without a SFE. Mizutani (1985:62), who examined the data from the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (1980), claims that the majority of Japanese utterances end with *kedo*, *keredomo*, *kedomo*, *kara*, *te* and most of the sentences with *desu/masu* accompany *ne* and *ga*. Mimaki (2007) states that when native Japanese speakers shift down the speech level they use a sentence-ending particle instead of a bare plain form predicate. In contrast, beginners and intermediate level Japanese language learners hardly ever use sentence-ending particles, which suggests that learners at this level haven't acquired such particles.

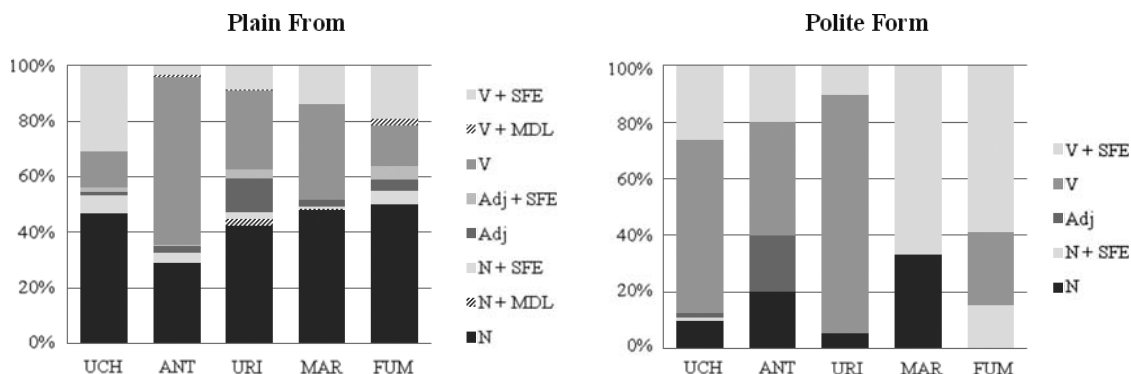
Table 4 and graph 2 below show the number and percentage of each predicate type: bare predicate, with modality, and with SFE¹⁴.

Table 4: Distribution of Predicate Form

ID	Sex	plain form											
		Noun			Adjectives			Verbs			Total		
		∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE
UCH	F	80 (32.9%)	-	11 (4.5%)	2 (0.8%)	-	3 (1.2%)	22 (9.1%)	-	53 (21.8%)	104 (42.8%)	-	67 (27.6%)
ANT	F	60 (28.4%)	-	7 (3.3%)	5 (2.4%)	-	1 (0.5%)	125 (59.2%)	1 (0.5%)	7 (3.3%)	190 (90.0%)	1 (0.5%)	15 (7.1%)
URI	M	96 (39.2%)	5 (2.0%)	6 (2.4%)	27 (11.0%)	-	8 (3.3%)	64 (26.1%)	1 (0.4%)	19 (7.8%)	187 (76.3%)	6 (2.4%)	33 (13.5%)
MAR	M	114 (45.2%)	1 (0.4%)	2 (0.8%)	6 (2.4%)	-	-	81 (32.1%)	-	33 (13.1%)	201 (79.8%)	1 (0.4%)	35 (13.9%)
FUM	F	89 (41.0%)	-	9 (4.1%)	7 (3.2%)	-	9 (4.1%)	26 (12.0%)	4 (1.8%)	34 (15.7%)	122 (56.2%)	4 (1.8%)	52 (24.0%)

ID	Sex	polite form											
		Noun			Adjectives			Verbs ¹⁴			Total		
		∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE
UCH	F	7 (2.9%)	-	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.4%)	-	-	44 (18.1%)	-	19 (7.8%)	52 (21.4%)	-	20 (8.2%)
ANT	F	1 (0.5%)	-	-	1 (0.5%)	-	-	2 (0.9%)	-	1 (0.5%)	4 (1.9%)	-	1 (0.5%)
URI	M	1 (0.4%)	-	-	-	-	-	16 (6.5%)	-	2 (0.8%)	17 (6.9%)	-	2 (0.8%)
MAR	M	5 (2.0%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10 (4.0%)	5 (2.0%)	-	10 (4.0%)
FUM	F	-	-	6 (2.8%)	-	-	-	10 (4.6%)	-	23 (18.0%)	10 (4.6%)	-	29 (13.4%)

Graph 2: Distribution of Predicate Form



From the table and graph above it appears that nouns are especially likely to be used without any modalities or SFE in the plain form. Three subjects (ANT, URI, MAR) frequently used adjectives and verbs without any SFE or modality in the plain form.

Kai (2010) exemplified that one of the unique characteristics of Yap subjects was that they use the written style plain form in conversation. There were several utterances where a noun predicate ended with a copula *da* and *de-arū*, which are the written style plain form. Although Palauan subjects used numerous plain forms they did not have that kind of written style.

Palauan subjects did not frequently use modalities. The modalities seen in their Japanese were one of seven types. There were twelve examples in total: ‘noun + *daroo*’ (5), ‘noun + *mitai*’ (1), ‘verb + *kamo-wakara-nai*’ (1), ‘verb + *daroo*’ (1), ‘verb + *wake*’ (1), ‘verb + *mitai*’ (2), ‘verb + *mitai ne*’ (1). Interestingly all modalities were used in the plain form.

Let’s compare them to a native Japanese speaker’s conversation. See the predicate

forms below used by five Japanese speakers¹⁵. The data is from conversations held between friends, so the form used is mainly the plain form. The duration of the data is shorter than our interview (5 minutes, 9 minutes, 10 minutes, 18 minutes, and 22 minutes individually), however, we can still see the tendency of the predicate form used by native Japanese speakers¹⁶.

Table 5: Japanese Native Speakers' Predicate Form

ID	Sex	plain form											
		Noun			Adjectives			Verbs			Total		
		∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE
SHUN	M	10 (18.5%)	-	9 (16.7%)	5 (9.3%)	-	5 (9.3%)	2 (3.7%)	-	13 (24.1%)	17 (31.5%)	-	27 (50.0%)
TAK	M	14 (16.4%)	-	8 (10.5%)	4 (5.3%)	1 (1.3%)	3 (3.9%)	5 (6.6%)	3 (3.9%)	26 (34.2%)	23 (30.3%)	4 (5.3%)	37 (48.7%)
MAT	F	15 (16.3%)	-	19 (20.7%)	2 (2.2%)	-	2 (2.2%)	5 (5.4%)	9 (9.8%)	39 (42.4%)	22 (23.9%)	9 (9.8%)	60 (65.2%)
K	F	41 (19.6%)	-	23 (11.0%)	10 (4.8%)	1 (0.5%)	21 (10.0%)	42 (20.1%)	8 (3.8%)	62 (29.7%)	93 (44.5%)	9 (4.3%)	106 (50.7%)
TOM	F	10 (25.6%)	-	1 (2.6%)	-	-	2 (5.1%)	4 (10.3%)	1 (2.6%)	2 (5.1%)	14 (35.9%)	1 (2.6%)	5 (12.8%)

ID	Sex	polite form											
		Noun			Adjectives			Verbs			Total		
		∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE	∅	+ MDL	+ SFE
SHUN	M	-	-	-	-	-	2 (3.7%)	-	-	8 (14.8%)	-	-	10 (18.5%)
TAK	M	-	-	4 (5.3%)	-	-	-	-	-	8 (10.5%)	-	-	12 (15.8%)
MAT	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.1%)	-	-	1 (1.1%)	-	-
K	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (0.5%)	-	-	1 (0.5%)	-	-
TOM	F	2 (5.1%)	-	3 (7.7%)	-	-	-	2 (5.1%)	-	12 (30.8%)	4 (10.3%)	-	15 (38.5%)

The table shows that modalities are not very popular in these Japanese corpuses, too, but slightly higher than with the Palauans. The percentage of SFE is much higher than with Palauan subjects. This comparison shows that Palauan subjects do not use SFE like native Japanese speakers do.

Kai (2010) observed the Yap subjects' Japanese and proposed two explanations for

why the plain form is used more than the polite form. One possible factor is that the plain form is the unmarked form in Japanese. The subordinate clauses with *te*, *to*, *node*, *noni*, *tara*, *nara*, *kara*, *keredo*, *shi* listed by Minami (1974) and the relative clauses, do not require a polite form even when the main clause is in the polite form. Casual conversations and written Japanese use plain forms. The plain form is used more often than the polite form. Non-native Japanese language speakers easily fall into its use if they are not trained to maintain a speech style or to monitor their own speech style. Another possible explanation is their deficient exposure to the polite form since Yap people learned Japanese when they were children. Children use the plain form more often. I claim that the usage of the plain form without a SFE produced by Palauan subjects can be explained in the same manner.

Maynard (1992) discusses a condition when the abrupt form can occur in Japanese. Her term ‘abrupt form’ is equal to a plain form without any SFE in this paper. She states that the abrupt form hardly occurs in conversation, but it is selected because of the speaker’s lower awareness of the situation 1) when the speaker expresses an abrupt remembrance or undergoes a sudden emotional surge, 2) when the speaker takes a perspective internal to the narrative setting and immediately responds within that framework, 3) when the speaker presents background information semantically subordinate within the discourse structure, and 4) when the speaker finds the addressee in close proximity and the speaker uses a style similar to self-address.

Assuming that our subjects find the addressee, namely interviewer, to be near, or they present background information to the interviewer, and they used a style similar to self-address, viz. plain form without a SFE. Even if this is the case, the previous examples (4) to (6) are not natural. But observe the examples below produced by FUM. Subject FUM also produced the plain form predicate without a SFE, however her utterance does not sound unnatural.

(7) <Ask FUM if her older brothers enter upper school.>

- 1 KAI: .. demo, etto=, .. Kinjoo-san no=, ano=, kyoodai wa ue no gakkoo ni
 but well -Ms. GEN DM sibling TOP higher of school DIR
 it-ta-n desu ka?
 go-PAST-NOM COP Q
 But, well, did your (Ms. Kinjo's) brother enter upper school?
- 2 FUM: ie ie. uchi no kyoodai-tachi mo ni-san-nen=, .. ni-san-nen gurai
 no no my.house GEN sibling-PL also two-three-year two-three-year about
 de= sensoo ga hajimat-te,
 by war SUG start-and
 No no. My brothers were just two or three years grade (students), and the war started and,
- 3 KAI: <P>un</P>.
 DM
- 4 FUM: Nihon no kyooiku wa, .. moo= moo= wazuka.
 Japan GEN education TOP already already little
 (they received) Japanese education only a bit.

- 5 FUM: .. ima=^{now} Nihon-go shaberu=^{speak} kyoodai mo su%, anmari, imotoo dake.
 now Japanese-language speak sibling already not:many younger:sister only
 → ototoo=to kara shita no hoo wa minna shaben-nai.
 younger:brother from below of person TOP everyone speak-NEG
Now, brothers who speak Japanese are not many, only my sister. Younger brothers do not speak (Japanese).

(8) <Ask FUM if Japanese customers come to her restaurant.>

- 1 KAI: Nihon-jin no okyakusan= kimasu ka/?
 Japanese-people of customer come Q
Do Japanese customers come (here)?
- 2 FUM: u=n. kimasu ne.
 DM come SP
Well. (They) come.
- 3 KAI: <P>he=</P>.. shocchuu kimasu ka/?
 DM often come Q
Well.. They come a lot?
- 4 FUM: (TSK) a\=. uchi ni tomaru okyakusan mo iru-shi=^{also exist-and}, mata koko ni sun-
 DM my:house LOC stay customer also exist-and also here LOC stay-
 → deru okyakusan mo tamani mata oshokuji ni kuru, <P>u=n</P>.
 ing customer also occasionally also eating for come DM
Well. There are customers who stay at my place and also customers who live here sometimes come for a meal (to my restaurant).

(9) <Ask FUM who speaks Japanese well in Palau.>

- 1 KAI: Nihon-go ga joozuna hito wa=^{good person TOP}, .. gakkoo ni it-ta hito=^{school DIR go-PAST people school}, .. gakkoo,
 Japanese-language SUB good person TOP school DIR go-PAST people school
 go-nen-kan it-ta hito desu ka?
 five-year-duration go-PAST people COP Q
Do people who are good at Japanese are those who went to school,.. who went to school for five years?
- 2 FUM: soo=^{so} desho ne. un. a go-nen-ka=n, koogakkoo ni it-ta hito.
 so I:guess SP DM DM five-year-duration DIR go-PAST people
 → kokumin-gakkoo ja-naku-te, Parao no gakkoo.
 national-school COP-NEG-and GEN school
I guess so. Yes. People who went to kogakko for five years. Not kokumin-school, but Palauan's school.
- 3 KAI: hai.
 DM
- 4 FUM: un. Parao-- (H) mukashi wa= Parao no= hito-bito no gakkoo to
 DM before TOP GEN people-PL GEN school and
 Nihon=-jin no gakkoo ga, betsubetsu yat-ta-n desu yo ne.
 Japanese-people GEN school SUB separated COP-PAST-NOM COP SP SP
Well. Palau-- In old time, school for Palauans and school for Japanese people were separated.
- 5 KAI: <P>u=n</P>.
 DM
- 6 FUM: e= Parao no= gakkoo wa go-nen o sotsugyoosu-reba sorekkiri.
 DM GEN school TOP five-year OBJ graduate-if end
If (children) graduated from Palauan's school after five year, that it.
- 7 KAI: <PP>un</PP>.
 DM
- 8 FUM: moo ue no gakkoo ni wa ika-re-nai.
 anymore upper of school DIR TOP go-POT-NEG
(Children) cannot enter upper school.

The speakers in (4) to (6) continuously produced utterances without a SFE. Such utterances do not sound like addressing the hearer but simply are enunciating the event. They become a monologue and sound unnatural as a conversation. The difference between (4) to (6) and (7) to (9) are, the latter have longer IU, complex and compound structure, and varieties of predicate including the mixture of polite form and plain form. Utilization of a longer IU, complex, and compound sentence means that the utterance is informative. The

mixture of polite form and plain form means that the speaker is manipulating the utterances to the foreground and to the background. That is what makes the conversation lively. The speaker can convey the information without a SFE and without making them unnatural, if the overall discourse is created in an adequate framework of full awareness for the hearer.

4-3. Sentence final elements

Next I shall further observe the sentence final elements. Sometime the subjects produced utterances with a SFE. The type of SFE seen in their Japanese is as follows:

Table 6: Type and Number of SFE

	Plain Form																			
	Noun					Adjective					Verb									
	yo	ne	ka ra	others	Total	yo	ne	ka ra	kara+ <i>a</i>	others	Total	yo	ne	no	n	no/n+ <i>a</i>	ka ra	kara + <i>a</i>	others	Total
UCH F		7	2	2: <i>ka ne</i> (2)	11	2		1			3	3	6	34	-	1: <i>n de</i> (1)	8	<i>kara ne</i> (1)	-	53
ANT F	-	2	2	3: <i>ra</i> (1), <i>ya</i> (1), <i>sa</i> (1)	7			1			1	-	1	-	1	1: <i>n de</i> (1)	4		-	7
URI M	2	2	2	2: <i>ka na</i> (1), <i>ra</i> (1)	8	4			1: <i>kara da yo</i> (1)	1: <i>na</i> (1)	6	7	-	2	1	3: <i>n da</i> (2), <i>n da ga</i> (1)	5	-	1: <i>na</i> (1)	19
MAR M	-	-	-	2: <i>ya</i> (1), <i>ya na</i> (1)	2						0	11	1	-	1	15: <i>n da</i> (4), <i>n da yo</i> (6), <i>n dakara</i> (1), <i>n ja</i> (3), <i>n ya</i> (1)	1	<i>kara ne</i> (3)	1: <i>kedo</i> (1)	33
FUM F	1	3		5: <i>ka na</i> (3), <i>ni yottemo</i> (1), <i>ra</i> (1)	9	2	1	1	1: <i>kara ne</i> (1)	4: <i>no</i> (1), <i>Adj+te</i> (3)	9	-	6	12	-	1: <i>no ka</i> (1)	2	-	13: <i>te</i> (6), <i>shi</i> (4), <i>kedo</i> (1), <i>ba</i> (1), <i>dake</i> (1)	34

	Polite Form													TOTAL (plain + polite)
	Noun					Verb								
	yo	ne	kara	n+ <i>desu+ a</i>	Total	yo	ne	n+ <i>desu</i>	n+ <i>desu+ a</i>	kara	kara+ <i>a</i>	others	Total	
UCH F	1	-	-	-	1	14	1	1	-	1		2: <i>no</i> (1), <i>na</i> (1)	19	87
ANT F	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-			1	16
URI M	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-			2	35
MAR M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-			10	45
FUM F	1	3	1	1: <i>n desu kara ne</i> (1)	6	9	11	1	3: <i>n desu yo</i> (1), <i>n desu yo ne</i> (1), <i>n desu kara ne</i> (1)	1	1: <i>kara ne</i> (1)	1: <i>kedo</i> (1)	27	85

Shibuya (1997, 2003) observed that the frequency order of sentence-ending particles used by his five Palauan subjects was *yo* > *ne* > *na*. Our subjects used many *yo* and *ne* as well, but they also used many other SFE.

Sato & Fukushima (2001), Chen (2005) state that plain forms with a final particle *yo* and *ne* are not found in native Japanese speakers' polite form based conversations. Chen (2005) states that using sentence-ending particle *ne* and *yo* in the plain form for a first-time conversation is unnatural because *ne* and *yo* emphasize that the utterance is addressed to the listener. These particles serve to draw the listener into the conversation. Using *ne* or *yo* with the plain form, which is usually used in the casual relationship, sounds intrusive for a first-time conversation.

Our subjects used the plain form more often than the polite form, so their speech level is basically the plain form. See the examples (10) (11) below. Usage of *ne*-ending plain form predicates in a plain form based conversation does not sound unnatural even if used during a first-time conversation. There is only one example (12) among all *ne*-ending utterances which sounds unnatural. This is because of the meaning and function of *ne*, not because it was used as a plain form in a first-time conversation. If it was *yo*, it would not sound so odd.

(10) <UCH talks about a Japanese researcher who visited her.>

- 1 UCH: kyone%, kyonen de-na-kute kotoshi no hajime-goro ni ki-ta no Para%
last:year COP-NEG-and this:year of beginning:around at come-PAST SP
 kocchi ni. (H) mata nya, ki-ta no.
here DIR (H) again DM come-PAST SP
Not last year, but the beginning of this year, (she) came here. (She) came again.
- 2 KAI: he[=].
DM
- 3 UCH: [da]ina%, daigaku no ne= kata-gata mo isshoni kimashi-ta.
university GEN SP people-PL also together come-PAST
University Professors also came together.
- 4 KAI: a soo desu ka=\. Parao o kenkyuushi-teru hito wa takusan imasu
DM I:see COP SP OBJ research-ing person TOP many exist
 ka[2ra=]--
SP
I see. There are lots of people who research about Palau--
- 5 UCH: [2a=2], takusan kuru ne=.
DM many come SP
Year, many (researchers) come (to Palau).

(11) <KAI asks if ANT used Japanese after WWII.>

- 1 KAI: demo sensoo ga owat-ta ato wa Nihon-jin ga moo ina-ku-natta
but war SUB end-PAST after TOP Japanese-people SUB already no:exist-become-PAST
 desho=/.
COP:TAG
But Japanese people left after the war ended, right?
- 2 ANT: un un.
yes yes
yes yes.

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- 3 KAI: de doo%, Nihon-go wa tsukaimashi-ta ka/?
 well Japanese-language TOP use-PAST Q
Well, did you use Japanese?
 → 4 ANT: .. hotondo tsukawa-nai ne.
 rarely use-NEG SP
Rarely (I) used (it).

(12) <ANT showed an English & Palauan bible and KAI asked her if she has a Japanese version at her house in Peleliuto.>

- 1 KAI: Peleliuto [no] ie ni arimasu ka\
 of house LOC exist Q
Do you have (the Japanese bible) at your house in Peleliuto?
 2 ANT: [Yeah].
Yeah.
 → 3 ANT: anta watashi no ie ki-tara ii ne Pereryuu. itsuka\
 you I GEN house come-if good SP sometime
You can come to my house in Peleliuto. Some day.

Chen (2005) introduces examples in which native Japanese speakers use *ne* in a first-time conversation. He states that these *ne* were used in a situation where the speech level was easily shifted into a plain form utterance¹⁷. Usami (1997) claims that *ne* has several functions: facilitative, attention-getting, softening, confirming, verbal-filler, and thus *ne* plays a role in discourse politeness. The examples above do not sound unnatural because the speech level is of the plain form. In example (10) and (11), the speaker used *ne* for the purpose of softening and confirming in Usami’s term.

Next observe the examples that contain the final particle *yo*. As opposed to *ne*, there are several unnatural utterances.

(13) <UCH talks about her siblings and mother.>

- 1 UCH: de= watashi, a niisan wa ichiban ue.
 and I DM elder:brother TOP the:most up
And I, my elder brother is the oldest.
 2 KAI: <P>un</P>.
 DM
 3 UCH: zen=bu hitori de, <A>fute watashi ga san-banme de=,
 all alone and and I SUB the:third and
One person in total, and I am the third (child) and,
 4 KAI: <P>un</P>.
 DM
 5 UCH: okaasan ga shin-da no.
 mother SUB die-PAST SP
my mother died.
 6 KAI: <P>u=n</P>.
 DM
 7 UCH: san-kagetsu-me ni.. watashi wa moo san-kagetsu de, okaasan ga shin-
 three-month-the at I TOP already three-month COP:and mother SUB die-
 → da yo.
 PAST SP
At (my) three month... My mother died when I was three month old.

(14) <MAR said that he sometimes volunteered as a translator for Japanese tourists.>

- 1 KAI: .. demo moo ima= saikin wa=, .. kan%, .. kankoo-dan to/=-- soto ni
 but already now recently TOP tourist-group with outside LOC
 ikimasu ka/?
 go Q
But already now recently... (do you) go out with a tourist group?
- 2 MAR: so.
 yes
 Yes.
- 3 KAI: <P>hu=n.. soo de[su ka\= </P>].
 DM I:see COP SP
Well. I see.
- 4 MAR: [ima] ne=, moo=, .. are= tsuuyaku aru kara mo, ..
 now SP anymore DM translator exist because anymore
 → wa%, u, .. boku tsukawa-nai yo. [2 (H)=2],
 DM me use-NEG SP
Now, anymore, there are translators, (they) do not use me anymore.
- KAI: [2<PP>un</PP>2].
 DM

(15) <Ask MAR if he writes Japanese now.>

- 1 KAI: .. ima kaku%, hiragana katakana o=, kaku koto ga arimasu ka?
 now OBJ write NOM SUB exist Q
Now, do you have a chance to write hiragana and katakana?
- 2 MAR: .. kak-eru=.
 write-POT
I can write.
- 3 KAI: <PP>un</PP>.
 DM
- 4 MAR: .. (H), de=, yomu.. yomu yo.
 and read read read SP
And, (I) read.. (I) read.

I claim that the unnaturalness of these utterances is not because *yo* was used in the plain form. Examples (13) (14) become natural if the predicate is changed to *no yo* or *-n da yo*. Example (15) also becomes natural if it is used in the potential form, *yomeru yo*. The use of the final particle *yo* is based on the speaker's assumption that the listener does not know about the information in question. In the context of a first-time conversation, the speaker cannot know and cannot conjecture what information the listener has. That is what causes *yo* to be unnatural here. Adding *no* or *no da*, which serves the function of conveying background information, makes the utterances natural. See the example below. If the utterance is an answer to a question or simply adding information (not giving background information), *yo* in the plain form predicate does not sound unnatural.

(16) <URI talks about his skill as a carpenter.>

- 1 URI: boku totemo raku=. daiku ga dekiru kara=.
 I very easy carpenter SUB do:POT beause
It is easy for me. Because I can do the carpenter work.
- 2 KAI: .. <P>soo desu ne=</P>.
 I:see COP SP
Yes that's right.
- 3 URI: <P>un</P>.
 DM
Well.. It is expensive if (we) ask people.
- 4 KAI: <P>fu==n</P>.. hito ni=, .. onegaishi-tara takai desu ne\
 DM people to ask-if expensive COP SO
Well.. It is expensive if (we) ask people.
- 5 URI: n n a= takai yo=.
 yes yes DM expensive SP
Yes yes it is expensive.

(17) <URI talks about outer islands.>

- 1 URI: (0) ookii fune. chiisai fune ika-re-nai.. totemo, tooi kara.
 big ship small ship go-POT-NEG very far because
Big ship. (We) cannot go (there) by a small ship. It's because it is very far.
- 2 KAI: nan-jikan gurai/?
 how:many-hours about
How many hours (to go there)?
- 3 URI: .. <@>futsuka</@>.
 two:day
For two days.
- 4 KAI: <F>futsuka</F>.
 two:day
Two day.
- 5 URI: @@ @H.
 6 KAI: futsuka=.
 two:day
Two days.
- 7 URI: u=n. totemo tooi yo=.
 DM very far SP
Yes. It is very far.

(18) <Ask MAR if there are still Japanese-period buildings.>

- 1 KAI: Nihon-jidai no ta%, tatemono wa=, .. doko= ni arimasu ka?.. mada
 Japanees-periof GEN building TOP where LOC exist Q still
 arimasu ka/ Nihon-jidai no tatemono.
 exist Q Japanese-period GEN building
Where do you have Japanese-period buildings?.. Do you still have Japanese-period buildings?
- 2 MAR: <E>court</E>, .. sorekara=, n, mada takusan aru yo.
 and:then DM still many exist SP
Court... and then there are still a lots.

Two subjects, UCH and FUM, used more SFE than the other subjects. They used SFE 35.8% and 37.4% of the time respectively, while the other three subjects used it only 7.6%, 14.3% and 17.9% of the time as shown in table 4. Usage of a variety of SFE made their Japanese more natural. See the examples below.

(19) <UCH said that her husband could speak Japanese too.>

- 1 KAI: de kekkonshi-te=, shi-ta toki ni wa=, dannasan to Nihon-go de
 then marry-and do-PAST time at TOP husband with Japanese-language INSy
 hanashi o shitemashi-ta ka/?
 talk OBJ do-PAST Q
Then when (you) were married, did (you) talk with your husband in Japanese?
- 2 UCH: un shi-teru yo gakkoo de narat-ta kara.
 yes do-ing SP school LOC learn-PST because
Yes (I) was doing because I learned (Japanese) at school.
- 3 KAI: a=. ie no naka de mo Nihon-go [desu ka]?
 DM house of inside LOC also Japanese-language COP Q
Well. (Did you use) Japanese inside the house too?
- 4 UCH: [u=n] tamani= ano iroiro mikkusushi-
 DM occasionally DM variety mix-
 te ne.
 and SP
Well, occasionally (we) mixed (them).

(20) <UCH talk about what she liked to eat when she was a child.>

- 1 UCH: go-sen de=,
 five-cent by
By five cents,
- 2 KAI: <P>ha=\i</P>.
 DM
- 3 UCH: de= aburaban o kat-te, aburaban te wakaru=/ [abura]ban\
 DM OBJ buy-and QUO understand
well, (I) buy aburaban, do you know aburaban, aburaban?
- 4 KAI: [###%]--
- 5 KAI: [2<P>un</P>2]. @@.
 DM
- 6 UCH: [2a=\2].
 DM
- 7 UCH: aburaban wa ne, pan mitaini tsukuru kedo=, [3naka3] ni anko ireru
 TOP SP bread like make although inside LOC sweat:bean put
 → no.
 SP
Aburaban is made like bread, but (we) put sweat beans inside.
- 8 KAI: [3<P>un</P>3].
 DM
- 9 KAI: ha=/=[4==4].
 DM
- 10 UCH: [4oishii yo= tottemo4].
 tasty SP very
Very tasty.
- 11 KAI: soshite ageru-n desu ka/?
 and fry-NOM COP Q
And then (you) fry (it)?
- 12 UCH: Yeah, sore o ageru no\[=. abura de\
 that OBJ fry SP oil INS
Yeah, (we) fry it. By oil.
- 13 KAI: [a= shi%-- un] un un [2un2].
 DM DM DM DM DM
- 14 UCH: [2<P>un</P>2].
 DM

(21) <Talk about NHK.>

- 1 KAI: enu-echi-kee wa yoku mimasu ka/?
 NHK TOP often watch Q
Do you watch NHK often?

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2 FUM: un.. <P>yoku mimasu yo. u=n</P>. moo= moo=, motto motto sono
 yes often watch SP DM already already more more than:that
 → hokani= bangumi ga hai-reba ii kedo ne=, @@@ enu-echi-kee shika
 other TV:channel SUB enter-if good though SP NHK only
 → nai kara\, aa\=.
 no:exist because DM
Yes.. (I) watch often. Well. It would be good if (we) can watch other (Japanese) TV programs, but there is only NHK.

(22) <FUM talks about the situation of Koror during the Japanese period.>

1 FUM: (H) Nihon no koro wa ne,
 Japan GEN era TOP SP
At the time of Japanese period,
 2 KAI: <P>un</P>.
 DM
 3 FUM: kono,.. tatemono no yane no kiri. sono,.. a= kiri, a= yane no. a,..
 this building GEN roof GEN that DM DM roof GEN DM
 → so a a shi% shita o toot-te iku no.
 yes DM DM under OBJ pass-and go SP
(we) walked through under the kiri of the roof.
 4 KAI: <P>hai</P>.
 DM
 → 5 FUM: sore-gurai, mo girigiri dat-ta no tatemono ga.. ima wa kono sui-
 that-much DM narrow COP-PAST SP building SUB now TOP DM empty-
 teru desho.
 ing COP:TAG
That much, the buildings were built so close. Now there are spaces (between buildings), right?
 6 KAI: ha [=].. he=.
 DM DM
 7 FUM: [<P>un</P>].
 DM
 → 8 FUM: monosugo-katta yo. Nihon no koro wa. u=n.
 tremendous-PAST SP Japan GEN era TOP DM
It was tremendous. During the Japanese period. Yes.

Usage of SFE is an important factor in making the utterance sound natural. Proper use of SFE plays a role in constructing a coherent interactive discourse. Subjects UCH and FUM had more opportunities to speak in Japanese after graduating *kogakko* than the other three. UCH worked at a duty free shop for a while and talked with Japanese tourists every day. FUM’s father was Japanese. Her relatives still live in Okinawa. She also speaks with Japanese tourists at her restaurant now. The examples in our data suggests that many South Island Sea people did not acquire a conversational strategy fulfilled by SFE during school education, and the acquisition of them requires many years of language learning and interaction with Japanese people.

Subjects UCH and FUM used relative clauses, nominalizations, conditions, and other kinds of complex sentences more often than the others as shown in Table 2. It appears that they can manage more complicated sentences. The difference between UCH and FUM is that UCH did not use modalities at all and there are many simplified structures and grammatical errors in her Japanese. She also displayed code-switches to English, the same as the other subjects. See the example below.

(23) <UCH said that she worked as a nurse assistant and then married.>

- 1 KAI: soo desu ka [= \].
 I:see COP SP
I see.
- 2 UCH: [Yeah] wakai= wakai toki kara kekkonshi-te,
 young young time since marry-and
Yeah, I married young, and
- 3 KAI: un.
 DM
- 4 UCH: ima==, .. ookii <E>family</E> ga arimasu yo=.
 now big SUB have SP
Now, (I) have a big family.

(24) <UCH talks about her husband.>

- 1 UCH: a danna-san wa <E>nineteen, ... sixty-five</E>,
 DM husband-Mr. TOP
My Mr. husband was, in 1965,
- 2 KAI: <P>un</P>].
 DM
- 3 UCH: [<E>March seven</E> ni nakukarimashi-ta.
 on die-PAST
died on March seventh.

Another significant difference between UCH and FUM is length of IU. FUM produced longer IU compared to the other subjects. See the examples below.

(25) <FUM talks about her life when she was small.>

- FUM: seekatsu wa hotondo, .. genchi no= seekatsu demo ari-nagara mata
 life TOP almost local of life COP be-same:time also
 Nihon no, seekatsu mo arimashi-ta ne. tabemono ni yot-temo.
 Japan of life also have-PAST SP food by depend-too
Life was almost... local style life and at the same time Japanese style life too. Foods too.

(26) <FUM explains why she lived in relative's house to go to kogakko.>

- 1 FUM: moo chiisai koro kara otoosan ga, ma== e=ya, yama no naka no ne=
 DM young time since father SUB DM DM mountain of inside of SP
 michi wa ano= abunai-shi=,
 road TOP DM dangerous-and
Since I was small, my father (said) that mountain roads were dangerous, and
- 2 KAI: <P>un</P>].
 DM
- 3 FUM: hitori de iku no mo taihen dakara= mazu koogakkoo no, Para% Korooru
 alone by go NOM also hard because first of
 no gakkoo ni it-te,
 GEN school DIR go-and
it was hard to go (such a road) alone, therefore (I) went Koror kogakko, and
- 4 KAI: <PP>u=[n</PP>].
 DM
- 5 FUM: [shi]nseki no uchi ni tomat-te, <P>un un</P>, .. shinbooshi-
 relative GEN house LOC stay-and DM DM endure-
 te= @,
 and
(I) stayed at relative's house, yes yes... (I) endured.
- 6 KAI: <P>un</P>].
 DM
- 7 FUM: yatto san-nen <@>owarimashi-ta</@>, aa\=.
 finally three-year finish-PAST DM
finally (I) finished three years (school).

(27) <Asked FUM if people read books.>

- 1 FUM: .. ima no wakai hito-tachi wa=, hora= ima no= <E>nyuusupeepaa/</E>,
now of young people-PL TOP DM now of
Nowadays young people.
- 2 KAI: un.
DM
- 3 FUM: sore shika yoma-nai no.
that only read-NEG SP
only read a newspaper.
- 4 KAI: a[=].
DM
- 5 FUM: [to]=, .. Amerika no,
and GEN
And... something written in English.
- 6 KAI: .. <P>un</P>.
DM
- 7 FUM: kotoba de kaka-re-ta mono toka Nihon no=, ano= ji de kaka-re-ta
word INS write-PASS-PAST thing like Japan GEN DM letter INS write-PASS-PAST
mono wa sukunai ne= yomu no soo de[sho] yom-e-nai-shi.
thing TOP few SP read NOM right COP:TAG read-POT-NEG-also
there are not much things written in Japanese, right, and also (they) cannot read.
- 8 KAI: [<PP>un</PP>].
DM

4-4. Language competence and attrition

Shibuya (2003:32) states that there could be elderly Palauans whose Japanese proficiency level was at the same level as their native language or even higher during the Japanese administration period, but that their Japanese competence declined after the Japanese people left the islands and subsequently contact with Japanese people became limited after 1945. This statement brings out two arguments. First, the *kogakko* enrollment rate in Palau reached almost 100% by 1935; however, Palau was under the Japanese administration period just for 31 years. It would probably be rare for the subjects' parents to have learned Japanese in school too. Shibuya's subjects and our subjects except FUM, whose father is Japanese, must have used their native language at home to communicate with their parents. How much proficiency could Palauan children gain from just three to five years of fundamental education in school? There are several statements made by educators in Taiwan and the South Sea Islands at the time which said that receiving an education only in *kogakko* was not enough to acquire adequate Japanese (Yanaihara 1935, Kawami 1942). Harley & Wang (1997:44) claim that monolingual-like attainment in each of a bilingual's two languages is probably a myth (at any age). Cummins (2000:34-35,57) remarks that immigrant students can quickly acquire fluency in the society's dominant language if they are exposed to it in their environment and at school. However, it generally takes a minimum of five years (and frequently much longer) for them to catch up to native-speakers in academic aspects of the language. Considering these research statements it is quite doubtful that Palauan children acquired true native proficiency from just a three to five year education.

One more discussion topic is language attrition. For argument's sake, say the Palauans acquired a high proficiency with the Japanese language before 1945. How much would they forget of the language that they once acquired? Olshtain (1986:197-198) suggests that the last learned forms which have not as yet been fully mastered, are early candidate for attrition. That is, forms and functions not fully acquired by the onset of attrition will be lost first. Berko-Gleason (1982:21) states that those things learned best will be retained longest. Bahrck (1984) shows the case of Spanish learners who learned well and could maintain the language for over twenty-five years.

It is quite doubtful that the Palauans' Japanese underwent attrition tremendously after 1945. Most Palauans probably acquired the Japanese language well enough to work for a Japanese family or a Japanese company, but it would be rare to encounter one whose Japanese language ability was equal to or better than their mother tongue. One subject, FUM is close to being such a case, yet her Japanese is not at a superior level. There are many superior level speakers in Taiwan. These people received a higher education ending at high school or college. They watched Japanese TV, read Japanese novels, and wrote in Japanese. FUM stated that she cannot write in Japanese. She could talk about daily things, but not about a superior level topic like politics, history, or the economy. The vocabulary she used was not at a superior level.

Summary

In this paper, I examined the predicate forms and the language competence of five elderly Palauans who received a Japanese education before 1945. They still maintain the Japanese language and can produce complicated sentences; however, there are several distinct usages of predicates in their Japanese. Subjects used the plain form more often than the polite form. They also produced many predicates without SFE or modalities. The most frequently used type is the noun predicate in the plain form without a SFE. Many of them have short IUs or simplified structures. Those utterances sound a little abrupt but acceptable. On the other hand, consecutive adjectives and verb predicates without a SFE sound unnatural.

Previous researches remark that Japanese native speakers do not use final particles *ne* and *yo* with the plain form predicate in a first-time meeting conversation. Our subjects used these sentence final particles. Most of the *ne*-ending sentences did not sound unnatural, but the *yo*-ending sentences did. It suggests that a good command of *yo* is more difficult to acquire than *ne*.

Some subjects did not have many chances to speak Japanese after 1945. Those subjects did not exploit conversational strategies fulfilled by SFE. I conjecture that they

did not acquire them during their school education. Our data suggests that acquiring such a strategy takes a long time and requires interaction with Japanese people.

In conclusion, I claim that the Palauans' Japanese proficiency level reflects their educational system during the Japanese period. They probably maintained what they acquired well and lost what they did not learn well, or did not acquire from the beginning. Conversational strategy carried out by sentence final elements would be one of them.

Appendix

1) The *kogakko* enrollment rate in 1927 and 1931 (Yanaihara 1935:392-393)

	1927	1931
Saipan	64.27%	82.32%
Yap	51.27%	66.93%
Palau	86.77%	93.61%
Chuuk	14.25%	31.21%
Pohnpei	67.27%	91.61%
Jaluit	34.85%	40.07%
total	43.61%	56.63%

The survey targeted children from eight to fourteen years old who were eligible to enter school. The percentage is based on the number of children who graduated or were studying in *kogakko* at the time of the survey.

2) Transcription symbols:

-	morpheme boundary	[]	overlap
.	final of intonation unit	... (N)	long pause (seconds)
,	continuing of intonation unit	...	medium pause
?	appeal	..	short pause
--	truncated intonation unit	(0)	latching
%	truncated word	@	laughter
\	falling pitch	<@>	while laughing
		</@>	
/	rising pitch	<E> </E>	English
=	lengthening	<#> </#>	indecipherable word or phrase
#	indecipherable syllable	(COUGH)	cough
		(TSK)	utterance of a click of the tongue

3) Grammatical symbols:

SUB	subject case marker	DM	discourse marker like 'hun', 'un', 'a'.
OBJ	object case marker	SP	sentence-ending particle like 'yo', 'ne'
TOP	topic marker	Q	question word
LOC	locative case marker	TAG	tag question
DIR	directive case marker	CAUS	causative
INS	instrumental case marker	POT	potential
COP	copula like 'desu'	PASS	passive

NEG	negative	NOM	nominalizer
PAST	past	ADV	adverbializer
QUO	quotation	BEN	benefactive
PL	plural	HON	honorific
		GEN	genitive

Notes

1. The number is cited from the US Department of Commerce (2009:21).
2. Korean people were included as Japanese in the data. The number of Koreans was 244 males and 73 females in all islands in 1933 (Yanaihara 1935:47).
3. Sudo (2003) p.188
4. According to The-Mainichi-Newspapers (1978:215), the final tally indicates 56,927 Okinawa people (79.2%) among 71,647 Japanese in 1942. Uehara (1940:61-66) shows a table of a Japanese population in 1936 listed by original prefecture. He claims that the reason there were many people from Okinawa was because Okinawa was suffering from overpopulation more than the rest of Japan; thus they had thought to go abroad early on. Also, they were familiar with potato cultivation (p.66).
5. The islanders' average life span was short and the infant mortality rate was high. Between 1926 and 1931, a quarter of the babies on average died before reaching two years of age (Yanaihara 1935:63-65).
6. Sudo (2003:182,184) states that it was 'from eight years old to fourteen years old', but in actuality there was a wider range of ages among the children.
7. In Kawamura (1994), there are statements made by teachers who taught in *kogakko* in Korea, the South Sea Islands, and other Japanese colonies. They describe the situation in *kogakko* at that time.
8. See the appendix for the enrollment rate in 1927 and 1931 in the South Sea Islands.
9. Seki & Hirataka (1997) also shows examples of the textbook used in Korea and the South Sea Islands.
10. Note that the subjects are all above 77 years old and had difficulties answering when their birthday was. I had to ask their ages and birth years several times. Two of them answered the age question in English, which is not their mother language. Their memory of the event year and age was not certain: they said that they do not remember well, and some used different ages during their stories. For those reasons, their birth year and age should be used only as a reference.
11. There are other terminologies. Plain form is called *da*-form or casual form, and polite form is called *desu/masu* form too.

12. Kai (2010) exemplified the predicate form used by five Yap subjects. Three out of five, who are all female, used the plain form more than 90% of the time (98.4%, 95.6%, 91.3%). The other two subjects, who are male and former Japanese soldiers, used the polite forms more (61.4%, 73.9%).
13. ANT used the plain form with a verb most often.
14. Modality here includes epistemic modality like '*kamo shirenai*' 'daroo' and deontic modality like '*nakereba naranai*' '*temo ii*'.
15. Predicates with *masho*, *masho ka* are included under 'bare verb' (without MDL and SFE). These two forms were found in MAR's utterances.
16. SHUN is the speaker in my corpus 'Shun's room'. TAK is the speaker in the corpus 'Politics', and MAT is the speaker in the corpus 'Osaka Boys'. I borrowed these corpuses from Associate Professor Ryoko Suzuki at Keio University. K is the speaker in the corpus 'Ryuugaku'. I received this corpus from Professor Tuyoshi Ono at University of Alberta. TOM is the speaker in the corpus 'Country music'. I obtained this corpus from Associate Professor Reijiro Shibasaki at Okinawa International University.
17. According to him, there are eight situations in which the speech level is easily shifted from the plain form utterance.

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