REVIEWS

S.A. Wurm, ed. New Guinea Area Languages and Language Study, Vol. 3, Language, Culture, Society and the Modern World. Pacific Linguistics C40, 1977. Pp lxxxvi + 1449.

Volume 3 of New Guinea Area Languages and Language Study is not easy to review, partly on account of "the spectacular size of the volumes", to use the editor's own expression (Volume 3, page xv). This volume is indeed large, consisting of two bulky fascicles with a total of more than 1,400 pages, and weighing approximately 3.5 kilograms. However, bulk is not the only problem. I had more difficulty in grasping the logic of the arrangement of the contents than I did in holding the two fascicles.

The subtitle of this volume is 'Language, Culture, Society and the Modern World', which suggests a broad sociolinguistic focus. The introduction further indicates that the purpose of the publication is to inform not only professional linguists and other social scientists, "but very much also persons whose interests lie in the practical application of the results of scientific study" (p.xv). The overall contents of Volume 3 do fall within the scope of the subtitle, with the exception of grammatical sketches of some Papua New Guinean languages used as lingue franche (in Part 7.4.5), which belong more obviously to Volumes 1 and 2, dealing specifically with technical linguistic description. However, I feel that greater effort was needed to make the volume acceptable to the non-specialist group of readers at whom it was aimed. Among these educationalists and administrators are identified. Such people would not be likely to see the relevance to their work of many of the articles in the first section of the volume, with titles such as 'Ta-Poman: Metaphorical Use of Words and Poetic Vocabulary in Asmat Songs', 'The Language of Myth - An Eastern Highlands Perspective' and 'Kinship Terminology in a Linguistic Setting'.

I am not claiming that there is no place for such articles in a publication of this nature, but rather that they are in the wrong place. One fairly automatically looks at the beginning of any book to gain an impression of the contents, and the beginning of Volume 3 strikes me as rather misleading, which is unfortunate.

I am also concerned that the arrangement of the present volume shows a certain lack of sensitivity towards many of the intended readers in the non-specialist group, who will surely be Melanesians. It seems to me that there is more than a hint of relish for the exotic in these and other articles. Topics such as Asmat poetics and the language of myth are no more representative of language, culture and society in the modern world in Melanesia than articles on rhymes in English or interpretations of television advertisers' jargon would be for a similar study in Europe. It is very unlikely that such articles

would be printed at the beginning of any work on European sociolinguistics. It seems to me, then, that different criteria for arrangement have been chosen for this publication on Melanesia. Another aspect of the work that I find disturbing is the tone of certain articles, which refer to Papua New Guinea "tribes", as in "Huli tribe" (page 393), "Foe tribe" (page 395), "tribes which had been unknown" (page 1317), and there is even an index containing the "names of tribal/national groups" (page 1371). An even more alarming passage talks of "...men...whose central interest in life was head-hunting" (page 388 line 6). How would the writers of these articles, who are missionaries, feel if some day a Melanesian commentator pointed out that these articles were written by members of the Anglo-Saxon and German tribes, whose central interests were the collecting of human souls and the ritual cannibalization of their deity?

Still on the subject of attitudes, I think that there is one serious omission in a volume that deals with languages and language study in the context of language, culture and society. That is the ethical considerations that should apply to all social science research. The New Guinea area is often popularly referred to as a "linguistic and cultural laboratory" or by similar expressions. I wonder how much the researchers who work in such areas would themselves like to be regarded as laboratory specimens. Ethical considerations toward research are certainly part of current trends in language study, and one would have expected these to have had some place in the original publication which was to have been part of the Current Trends series (Preface, p.vii). However, even if for some reason no such articles had been commissioned for that publication, they should have been included in the present one. It is a very important aspect of language study in the modern world.

As I have already said, this volume was difficult to review. I have given some of my reasons above. Another difficulty was simply the vast number of articles, of very differing quality. Some are excellent, such as R.K. Johnson's survey of 'Administration and Language Policy in Papua New Guinea', which includes a welcome appendix containing the most significant official notices from the Papua New Guinea Education Gazette, which chart clearly changes in policy. H. Myron Bromley's article on the development of an orthography for Lower Grand Valley Dani in Irian Jaya is also a fascinating and scholarly account, which at the same time can easily be understood by the non-specialist. There are many other articles of equally high calibre, and only considerations of space prevent me listing them. I hope that many of these articles will eventually be reprinted in a publication of more manageable size. There are other articles which are decidedly amateurish. These, too, probably have a place, but I wish that there had been some way by which the obviously well-researched and scholarly articles which fulfil entirely the stated aims of the publication could have been presented with more prominence, probably in the first fascicle, and the miscellanea could have been relegated to the second fascicle. This would in my opinion greatly have improved the format, especially with the non-specialist reader

in mind. The first fascicle would have provided an overview of the field, and the second would have contained articles of more limited interest. In this way, I feel that some of the sensitive issues I indicated earlier might have been avoided or toned down.

Finally, I must say that I am disappointed by the failure to commission more articles from the Melanesian people of the area. There are two informative articles by Ebia Olewale, but all the others are written by foreigners. This situation would have been more understandable if the volume had aimed at a high level of technical linguistic analysis. But this was not the case. In particular the sections on the development of vernacular literacy and education would have gained greatly in interest if they had included articles written by Melanesian people who have been involved in such programmes, either as students or teachers.

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W. Flierl and H. Strauss (eds) Kâte Dictionary.
Pacific Linguistics C41, 1977. Pp. xxxiii + 499.

This Kâte-English Dictionary is a revision based on a Kâte-German-English dictionary compiled by C. Keysser in 1925. It represents the Wemo dialect of the Kâte language, originally spoken near Finschhafen, which has been used as a lingua franca by the Lutheran Mission and Church since the turn of the century and is said to be spoken by an estimated 70,000 people.

This dictionary includes an extensive introduction by K.A. McElhanon which gives interesting historical information, describes the sound system, and provides data on regional variations. There is also a map of the Kâte area.

The book is easy to read with bold print for all vernacular items. I feel the authors have done well in collecting about 8,000 entries and in listing the many senses for each entry. The glosses are usually very complete, pinpointing the full meaning of a word, e.g. 'to tear (by someone sitting on it)'. The kinship glosses are also very clear and there is helpful grammatical information given

for some entries. There are many good collocational examples, e.g. iŋnezo 'to throw sparks (a fire), to swarm (insects), to whirl (dust or leaves)'. There are also many helpful encyclopedic explanations for cultural terms.

The compilers make use of cross referencing for like meanings or phonemic variation, which is good, although the dictionary user will occasionally find that the word he is referred to does not appear in the alphabetical listing, e.g. hoe sinac, (cf. gâpiŋ) (p. 142). Also many words are not reciprocally cross-referenced.

The sentences used to illustrate the senses are generally good, although some senses may have several sentences while others are left out altogether, e.g. Anutu 'God' (p. 5) has four sentences to illustrate it; jambuŋ 'blessing, charm' (p. 157), has six sentences to illustrate 'blessing', none at all for 'charm'.

There are a few things which the casual reader may find confusing in the rather loosely organized system of identation of entries. For each entry all of its definitions are listed, separated by commas. The indented examples which follow sometimes include senses not indicated in this listing, and other examples follow which do illustrate these senses but are not indented, but appear as separate entries, e.g. all of the occurrences of aafec, (p. 1). âgo 'friend' (p. 9) is a main entry. Other related phrases are indented under this entry. Intermingled, however, are some completely unrelated phrases included because they fit in alphabetically, e.g. âgo papia qârenkezo 'to write a letter'. See also honengoc 'stomach'. Indented under this entry are 13 words, vaguely related in meaning, including hosâko 'stomach' and hosiec 'bottom', which do not occur elsewhere in the dictionary.

Idioms and compounds are not labelled as such and often are not translated literally as well as freely. (Literal translations are interesting to linguists doing comparative studies.) An example of this is tembon n. 'wave' (p. 351). One illustrative sentence under this entry is bune tembon bakac 'his stomach is growling'. No hint is given that such a phrase is an idiom, such as by placing idioms at the end of the list of examples, but they may occur anywhere. An example of a compound which is not identified as such is dâŋhândâŋ which is a combination of dâŋ 'word' and hândâŋ 'seed' meaning 'main thought', according to McElhanon (p. xxiii). One good note about the use of a word in compounds is found on p. 15. âte, we are told, occurs in compounds when feet are involved in the action.

The main entry is often followed by another word, e.g., aimuŋ, -jaha (p. 3), with no explanation of the use of the second form in the examples which follow. Also unclear to me are double entries such as ane ane bazo, -ezo (p. 5). Does this mean that bazo and ezo are interchangeable? Another double entry is ase, motec- n. 'uterus' (p. 7). (motec is listed again under the m's and means 'boy'.)

Homonyms appear as separate entries with elevated numbers. They are often unrelated words, but not always. nemu and zaŋesoŋ are two