

REVIEW

Dutton, T. E., 1973. Conversational New Guinea Pidgin, Pacific Linguistics, Series D, No. 12, v + 291 pp. \$6.50

Sadler, Wesley, 1973. Untangled New Guinea Pidgin: A Course of Study, Kristen Pres, Madang, 179 pp. \$2.00

These two books follow in the wake of a renewed interest in New Guinea Pidgin English (also called Neo-Melanesian, Melanesian Pidgin, Pidgin, and Tok Pisin, to give the most common alternant names used). The interest culminated in a conference on Pidgin held in Port Moresby at the University of Papua New Guinea in September of 1973. A special volume of the papers given at the conference will be published by Kivung, probably in 1974.

The two books under review differ widely in content, but not in purpose: both are written expressly to teach beginning students to become somewhat fluent in the language. It is therefore instructive to compare the two books to see how well the authors seem to accomplish their aims.

Dutton's book has the advantage of a tested pedagogical series of lessons developed over a considerable period of time. It has tape-recordings of each lesson for the student to follow. It incorporates conversational dialogues, drills based on the dialogues but with additional vocabulary and grammatical items, grammar notes throughout, and finally, a helpful selection of texts in Pidgin. New Guinea music provides a background for the lessons.

Sadler's book, on the other hand, is much less organized in its control of vocabulary introduction, the grammar notes are briefer, and there are no texts. According to Sadler (p. 17), a total of 410 new words and 1565 sentences are taught in his book. Dutton does not tell how many words or sentences he introduces, but I would guess that there are many more. The standard Pidgin dictionary¹ has over 2,000 main entries, Balint's phrase book has 1,200 expressions, Steinbauer's has over 1,600 words, while Litteral's programmed Course has 382 items listed in the index.²

However, the number of vocabulary items or sentences introduced should not be the criteria by which either of the books under review is judged. Judgment should be based, rather, on the aptitude of the students who have taken the courses. Here, however, we are short of any real evidence so that I can only speculate on how the courses appear to one who

learned Pidgin when the only books readily available were Murphy's and R.A. Hall Jr.'s efforts.³

One of the greatest problems for expatriates attempting to learn Pidgin is to master a non-English sound system. Both Dutton (pp 6, 18-20, 36) and Sadler (pp 25-32) attempt to help the student in this area. Dutton covers the vowels /i, e, a, o, u/ , certain consonants /p, t, k, f, v, l, r/ , consonant sequences /st, br, kl, tr, gr, bl, skr, sp, ks/ , and patterns of stress on the first, second, and last syllables. As Sadler indicates (p. 26), consonant clusters at word-beginning in Pidgin are commonly interrupted by a vowel (a central vowel, we might add). The pronunciation of Pidgin is, generally speaking, only an approximation of what either Dutton or Sadler outline. It naturally corresponds most closely to the phonemic inventory of the speaker, together with appropriate rules of clustering, vowel harmony, and allophonic conditioning. Only an English speaker pronounces Pidgin as clearly and dutifully as either author suggests. Dutton's tapes, taken from a variety of areas, illustrate some of the natural range of pronunciation in New Guinea Pidgin. In short Dutton and Sadler skip over some of the phonemic differences well attested in other sources.⁴

There are 16 Units in Dutton; Sadler contains 13 chapters. The Units in Dutton are laid out with 15 introductory conversations (Unit 16 contains texts) followed by useful expressions, vocabulary expansion exercises, grammatical comments and drills, a test, and supplementary vocabulary. The Units are well planned, varied, and interesting. The chapters in Sadler are introduced by a conversation, followed by grammatical comments with illustrative sentences. Each chapter is concluded by tests which are questions related to sentence materials already introduced in the chapter.

Disregarding the conversations, the scope of the two books can be compared in some sense by examining the pronominal coverage. The numbering for Dutton in Chart I corresponds to his Unit and section outline; that in Sadler to Chapter and page.

It would seem, on the basis of Chart I, that Dutton and Sadler provide a similar coverage on pronominal forms and functions. In Dutton, however, there are drills which are intended to aid the student to master the forms. Sadler, on the other hand, explains and illustrates the forms. Both introduce most of the forms early, but in Dutton alone are they structured with the ordered drills necessary for quick proficiency.

CHART I

Pronoun Type Coverage	Dutton	Sadler
Personal, including	1.1	II 44-5
dual and trial	2.1	IX 129-32
Special uses of <u>em</u> , <u>en</u>	2.4	V 78-83
<u>ol</u>	3.1	VI 92-5
	8.5	VIII 116-18
<u>Olgeta</u> forms	6.1	IV 133
Relative forms		
<u>husat man</u>	} 7.5	} III 57-9 (as interrogatives)
<u>wanem man</u>		
<u>long em</u> ⁵		
<u>dispela</u> (ples, samting)	8.5	VI 94-5 VI 95-6
Emphatics	8.2	XIII 177-8
Reflexives	11.3	XIII 175-6 VI 93
Distributive and Reciprocal	13.2	

The same is true in other areas: Sadler gives a wealth of good examples on the use of bilong and long (probably more than Dutton). But, whereas Sadler has much to say about the forms and heavily depicts their use, Dutton concentrates on drills to help the student master the forms. In Sadler the pronoun em and the introducer i are paradoxically lost in a mass of data illustrating their use. Dutton, on the other hand, attempts to be very careful that the introduction of new items is built squarely on earlier introduced materials. It takes longer, but it is much easier to assimilate.

The aspectual system in Pidgin is one of the most important for a foreign speaker to

master. There are several common auxiliaries, pre and post verb, which are used, but only the pre-verb forms are given here:

- (1) laik i (+ verb) 'want to'
- (2) inap (i) (+verb) 'able to'
- (3) save (i) (+verb) 'know how to'
- (4) klostu (i) (+ verb) 'about to'
- (5) ken i (+ verb) 'allowed to'
- (6) kirap i (+ verb) 'begin to'
- (7) mas i (+ verb) 'obliged to'

Many of these can be conjoined in verb phrases:

- (8) laik i save (+ verb) 'wants to know how to'
- (9) klostu (i) inap (+ verb) 'about to be able to'
- (10) ken i save (+verb) 'can know how to'

Both Dutton and Sadler spend a good deal of time on the auxiliary verbs and consequently on the use of the verb particle i. Sadler calls it an "introducer" and gives examples such as the following:

- (11) Nau ol i go long skol. 'Now they go to school'.
- (12) Ol i mas kisim save. 'They must get knowledge'.
- (13) Em i no ken i go. 'He is not permitted to go.'
- (14) Em i no strongpela. 'He is not strong.'

In (13) go is called by Sadler one of the i verbs, including kam, stap, and dai; in (14) i is said to introduce the condition of the subject, i.e. perform a 'to be' function. Otherwise in (11) and (12) i functions to introduce the action. Later (Ch. 3 and 4) Sadler attempts to outline when i does not occur: after acting mi, yu, yumi; after inap, ken, mas, laik, before inap; before an i-verb after save; before bilong; after subject when quality or quantity is emphasized; with em tasol; with introduction of a name; after na if positive and closely related to previous clause; and so on.

If the learner rigidly follows the rules and sometimes exceptions which are outlined for the use of i, he may become confused because in many areas the use of i is influenced by features common to New Guinea languages. There are two specific features of New Guinea languages which influence the use of i, and because these are language-specific it is just as difficult to be prescriptive about i as it is about Pidgin phonemics.

- However, the features can be stated generally as : (a) morphophonemic influences;
 (b) cross-referential influences within or between clauses.

Some of the examples given in Sadler illustrate these influences, e.g. the following from p.55 :

- (15) Em i salim mi i go long Madang. 'He sent me (to go) to Madang.'
 (16) Em i laik mekim nem bilong yu i kamap bikpela. 'He wants to cause your name to become important.'

Most often the feature of cross reference will allow the second i in (15) to be mi, in that the object of the clause (mi) is identical to the subject of the second underlying clause ('I went to Madang'). In (16) the second i substitutes for nem, not for em and follows the same cross-referential pattern.

The optional insertion of i between laik and mekim in (16) or in (2-4) above is conditioned by the underlying pattern of consonant clustering of the language: most often i interrupts contiguous consonants in fast (or normal) speech. Likewise i can be written in (15) as mi i, but in actual speech the two i vowels would fuse.

In Dutton the use of i is always associated with some other verb or particle: ken i (definite future), i stap (continuous), tasol i nogat (unsuccessful action), em i (? concerning that'),⁶ i dai ('to cease') i gat ('there is/are') i go and i kam (directionals), i no gat wanpela ('nobody, no one, nothing'), laik i ('want to'), bringim i go (or bringim i kam) ('take' or 'bring'). Here in Dutton at least some grammatical properties are associated with the function of i. Most of these can be found in context in the texts in Unit 16. Here, however, Dutton could have provided a valuable pedagogical aid by pointing out the grammatical points which are listed in the index. A search of the index fails to locate common grammatical forms in the texts, such as mi functioning as a relative clause marker and subject (Text 7, p. 267), the ol i kolim 'which is called' expression (Text 11, p.273, Text 10, p.272, etc.), the i wak long + verb for the repetitive continuous action (p.272-3), and so on. Clearly an analysis of the texts in the light of the grammar points given in Dutton will help any student advance his knowledge of conversational Pidgin structure.

This review has not attempted to examine each sentence in either Dutton or Sadler. As the brief comments on i above indicate, this would be a long and difficult process. For the purposes of assessing the scope and content of both books for language learning, our

cursory ones are adequate; for those interested in a descriptive grammar on Pidgin, or even a full pedagogical one, an exhaustive search of both books would be an ideal starting place. In the same manner, both books will provide the student of Pidgin English with a good start, but it would be a mistake to stop with either.⁷

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Mihalic (1971) is the standard reference dictionary. The count I have given is rough, based on a token count of main items. If sub-entries and derived meanings are added the count would climb to over 12,000. For example Mihalic lists 48 sub-entries under haus 'house', two derived meanings for mekim ('to make, cause, create, force' or 'to do, act, behave') plus an additional 31 sub-entries. The entries for bel includes 5 derivations: (1) 'belly, stomach, entrails, innards'; (2) 'womb, uterus, pregnancy'; (3) 'the heart, the mind, seat of emotions, affection'; (4) 'the inside, the interior of something'; (5) 'the bulging part of anything', for a total of 33 sub-entries.
- ² The count for Balint (1969) is his own (v). On the same page he states that his book includes a 2000-entry English-Pidgin-French sports dictionary. Steinbauer (1969) has several double entries, e.g. fom is entered twice with meanings of 'farm, class' and 'bench'. All entries have English and German translations, plus Pidgin illustrative sentences. The small count of items in Litteral (1969) is misleading. Some 20,000 words of text were processed by a computer so that a concordance frequency count helped determine the words included in his course.
- ³ J. Murphy (1943) and R. A. Hall, Jr. (1943), but only the former was readily available and helpful for the layman.
- ⁴ Hall (1943: 12-14) outlines some 31 segmental phonemes for Pidgin, including 11 vowels. This inventory would be virtually impossible to substantiate by any one indigenous Pidgin speaker. Experience has apparently shown (Mihalic 1971:4) that 5 vowel symbols are adequate, regardless of the actual number of vowel phonemes.

- 5 In the Highlands longen is appropriate, but the possessives form (unit 3.1 in Dutton) bilongen is usually pronounced broken.
- 6 Dutton uses em i to illustrate "verbless sentences", as in Em i wanem? 'What is it?', whereas Sadler would identify the i in such sentences as the 'to be' form. The distinction in meaning in Dutton (p.27) between em and em i is tenuous at best. Again morphophonemic alternations must be considered.
- 7 Dutton (pp. 291-2) provides a good Pidgin English reading list. This can be supplemented by the bibliographies in Hall (1966), Mihalic (1971) and Wurm (1971), as well as forthcoming materials by Mühlhäusler.

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NOTICE

LINGUISTIC SOCIETY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA EIGHTH ANNUAL CONGRESS

Ukarumpa, E.H.D., 26-30 September, 1974

The Linguistic Society of Papua New Guinea cordially invites you to attend its Eighth Annual Congress which will be held at Ukarumpa, Eastern Highlands District, Papua New Guinea, between Thursday, 26 and Monday, 30 September. The Congress will begin on the Thursday afternoon and will extend as long as is necessary, the remainder of the weekend being taken up with excursions.

Special Guest: Dr. Kenneth L. Pike will be visiting Papua New Guinea during September and October 1974. He is expected to attend the Congress as a special guest of the Society.

Papers: Papers will be accepted in all fields of linguistics and language teaching, although those with relevance to Papua New Guinea and the Pacific are preferred. It is hoped that as many papers as possible will subsequently be made available to the Society's Journal, KIVUNG.

Those presenting papers at the Congress are asked to provide titles, and, if possible, abstracts of papers by 31st August at the latest.

Travel: The Summer Institute of Linguistics will make available a maximum of 22 seats on its planes to transport persons attending the Congress from Port Moresby to Ukarumpa and back. Planes will leave Port Moresby on the morning of Thursday, 26th and return on Monday, 30th. The cost of the return fare is \$62 per person.

Accommodation: Accommodation will be provided at S.I.L.'s guest house at a rate of \$8 per day, full board.

Congress Costs: There will be a registration fee of approximately \$4 to cover the cost of duplicating papers, abstracts, etc., of refreshments, and of the Society Dinner.

Further Information: Those who intend to attend the Conference should inform the Secretary, Dr. F. Liefink, Department of Language, Box 4820, University, P.N.G., by 31 July, 1974.