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This volume contains five papers on various aspects of five Papua New Guinea languages - Maisin (Malcolm Ross), Labu (Jeff Siegel), Mussau (Robert Blust), Erima (Michael A. Colburn), and Imonda (W. Seiler).

The Maisin language of the Oro (or Northern) Province has long been the subject of discussion in respect of its genetic classification. Unfortunately, this discussion has been hampered by the fact that very little descriptive work has been published on the language. Ross's article "Maisin: a preliminary sketch" (pp.1-82) attempts to remedy this situation, and he provides a quite detailed phonological analysis, as well as a sketch of Maisin morphology and syntax.

Apart from its obvious value in providing a sounder starting-point from which discussions of Maisin's history can proceed, Ross's careful and innovative treatment of the phonology is particularly interesting. Maisin phonology and morphophonemics are quite complex; all vowels and many consonants may occur "short" and "long"; syllabification and timing are of considerable complexity; while reduplication and other affixation involve not a few intricacies. Ross's use of the concept of the mora is of assistance in untangling Maisin's complicated syllable structure.

Siegel (pp. 83-157) does for the Labu language of the Morobe Province what Ross does for Maisin. Although Labu is clearly Austronesian, its subgrouping status has been uncertain, and this uncertainty has been due in large part to the absence of published data on the structure of the language. Siegel's "Introduction to the Labu language" briefly describes the phonology, morphology and syntax of Labu, provides a brief text and also contains a Labu-English vocabulary of over 800 words, together with an English index.

Labu is of particular interest phonologically in having a seven-vowel system, and also in possessing tonal contrasts. It has a four-way number contrast in the pronouns, but has lost the common Austronesian alienable-inalienable possessive distinction.

Blust's article "A Mussau vocabulary, with phonological notes" (pp. 159-208) seems to me to be slightly mis-titled as, in addition to a vocabulary of nearly 600 words

in the Mussau language of the New Ireland Province, he also gives a brief grammatical outline, quite a bit of detail on the synchronic phonology, and some information on Mussau's diachronic phonology. Like Ross's and Siegel's contributions it has the virtue of being a thorough piece of work which extends our knowledge of a historically important language.

While the first three articles in this volume are general sketches of three Austronesian languages, the remaining two are treatments of particular aspects of the grammar of two Papuan languages.

Colburn's paper, "The functions and meanings of the Erima deictic articles" (pp. 209-272), begins by noting that, in the initial study of Erima (Madang Province), and three deictic articles "were found to occur in a bewildering variety of contexts" - as locatives, demonstratives, relativisers, topic markers, conditional markers, and as conjunctions in various contexts. His extremely detailed study not only clarifies the situation in Erima, but should also be of real assistance to linguists faced with similar problems of analysis in other Papuan languages.

Finally, Walter Seiler's brief contribution, "Imonda part-of-whole marking" (pp. 273-283), examines the role of the suffix *-l* in Imonda, a Papuan language of the West Sepik Province.