B. Turner, Manam Teaching Grammar. Ukarumpa, Papua New Guinea: The Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1986 [Data Papers on Papua New Guinea Languages No.34].

Reviewed by Frantisek Lichtenberk, University of Auckland, New Zealand

This slim volume is, in the words of its author, "a teaching grammar of the Manam language, primarily intended for use in Manam schools and adult education classes" (p.5). The presentation is by and large non-technical. Rather surprisingly for a teaching grammar, there are no exercises for the students.

Chapter 1 is a brief discussion of the historical relations of Manam to other Austronesian languages. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 form the bulk of the book. They deal with "Letters and syllables", "Words" and "Phrases" respectively. There is also a chapter on "Manam spelling rules". The grammar contains no discussion of syntax beyond the level of the phrase.

While writing a grammar for readers with no formal linguistic training is an eminently worthy enterprise, one needs to be careful not to slip from a non-technical presentation to merely casual, simplistic, inconsistent, inaccurate and downright wrong remarks about the language. Unfortunately, the present grammar suffers from exactly this shortcoming. There is the all-too-common confusion of sounds with letters: "A letter that does not vibrate the vocal chords is called voiceless." (p.15). However, there are more serious problems in the discussion of Manam phonology. The most unsatisfactory is the treatment of syllable structures. Two basic types of syllable are said to exist in Manam: (i) "the 'nasal syllable' which consists of a single consonant, the nasal letter, ***m***"; and (ii) the "vowel syllable", whose structure is
(C_1) (V_1) V (V_1) (C_2), where C_1 is any consonant, C_2 is any nasal, and the V_1 vowels need not be identical (p.20).

It is true that Manam has syllabic ***m***; however, not only ***m*** but the other two nasals, ***n*** and ***ŋ***, can be syllabic as well. But not every instance of a nasal is syllabic. The nasals become syllabic only when they realize the first person singular irrealis subject/mood prefix when the prefix is attached to a consonant-initial stem; for example, ***m-baz-i*** 'I will carry it', and ***n-do?-i*** 'I will take it'. The underlying form of the subject/mood marker is ***m***-, which assimilates to the following consonant, hence perhaps the misleading

statement that only *m* can be syllabic. (There is no mention of nasal assimilation anywhere in the grammar, and it is not indicated in the proposed orthography.)

As far as the other syllable type is concerned, it is not at all obvious why sequences of up to three vowels are considered tautosyllabic. Part of the problem may be phonetic inaccuracy. The author says that Manam ***tou*** 'sugar cane' sounds like English ***tow***, and that the ***i*** in ***ŋai*** 'he/she' and the ***e*** in ***ŋae*** 'this' both sound "something like an English '*y*' " (p.21). To this reviewer, the segments in question sound like vowels, not glides. ***ae*** 'leg' is said to be monosyllabic, but how does one then account for the fact that either vowel can be stressed: ***áe-di*** 'their legs' and ***aé-gu*** 'my leg(s)'. (***-di*** requires ante-penultimate stress; with ***-gu***, stress falls on the penultimate syllable.)

In the consonant chart on p.17, *q*, a uvular stop, is said to be articulated in the throat, while ʔ is said to be articulated in the neck. (On p.131, ʔ is said to be articulated in the throat.)

In the chapter on spelling, there is a section dealing with "dialect variations". Two characteristics of the dialect variations are given. One dialect is said to have ***dam*** for 'water' and ***keu*** for 'dog', while another dialect is said to have ***daŋ*** and ***ʔeu*** respectively. This statement is extremely misleading. It implies that one dialect has *m* where the other has *ŋ*, and *k* where the other has ʔ. In fact, *m* and *ŋ* are in free variation in word-final position before a pause; elsewhere the two nasals contrast. The alternation is not a difference between dialects. As far as the *q*-ʔ difference is concerned, there are two factors that are of relevance, the age of speakers and geography. Manam is undergoing a change from *q* to ʔ. In some areas the change has been carried to completion; in other areas the older people still use *q* while the younger people use ʔ, but the critical age is not the same in all the villages.

In the chapter on words, the section dealing with verbs is the most extensive one. (The other parts of speech have relatively little or no morphology.) Verb roots are said to take nuclear prefixes and nuclear suffixes. This complex structure is called 'the (verb) nucleus'. Nuclei take outside prefixes and suffixes. (For the benefit of the students, a complete verb is compared to an egg; the nucleus is the yolk, and presumably the outside affixes are the white.) A list of the verbal affixes is given at the end of the section, but there are no explicit statements concerning their ordering and combinatorial possibilities.

The presentation of some of the verbal affixes is rather uninformative. About the 'transitive consonants' (the various consonants added to certain transitive verb stems) the author says: "Learning how to use these [consonants] correctly is part of acquiring the Manam language." (p.42). Is there a rule governing the use of the various consonants, or does one have to learn which consonant goes with which verb? (The latter is, in fact, the case.)

To form constructions corresponding to English 'both', 'all three', etc., Manam has several alternative strategies. The author lists the various ways of saying 'Give me all three bush knives!' and then says: "Of course these all have different shades of meaning as you can figure out from the meanings of the different suffixes." (p.90). All of the suffixes are discussed elsewhere in the book, but to this reviewer at least, it is not at all clear what shades of meaning they are supposed to impart on the numerical constructions.

The meaning of the interrogative quantifier ***ira*** is said to be 'how many?'. Contrary to what is stated in the table on p.89, ***ira*** can be used not only with 'countable' but also with 'not countable' nouns ('how much?').

There appear to be inaccuracies in some of the examples, either in the Manam form or in the gloss. For instance, on p.92 ***sopi ono kusi i-asak-i*** is glossed 'the soap for washing clothes'. The expected Manam form is ***sopi ono kusi asak-a***, with a verbal noun rather than a finite verb, or alternatively the gloss ought to be 'He/She washed the clothes with soap'. On p.91 in the section on the comitative postposition, an example is glossed 'They roasted galip nuts with sago', but a more appropriate gloss would have been 'They roasted sago with galip nuts'.

The section on the numerals contains interesting information about the special forms used to count fish, coconuts, breadfruit, other 'strong stemmed fruit' and taro.

The chapter on phrases deals with verb phrases, noun phrases and, cursorily, postpositional phrases. There is a fairly extensive discussion of the various possessive constructions in Manam, but only 'pronominal' constructions ('my father', 'his house') are discussed. There is no explicit discussion of constructions with nominal possessors ('the child's father', 'the man's house'). There are some awkward turns of phrase such as the following: "When someone owns something, then he is said to 'possess' that thing—like his name, his head, his mother, his friends, and his shadow, but he does not really 'own' them in a strict sense." (p.107).

Manam has three basic types of possessive construction, called 'inalienable', 'edible' and 'alienable' by the author, and the section contains a number of interesting examples of the use of one and the same noun in more than one construction type; for example: ***ege-gu*** 'my side' (of my body), ***ege kana-gu*** 'my side' (of a piece of food), and ***ege ne-gu*** 'my side' (of anything else, like land).

Compound noun phrases are said to consist of "two or more heads, connected by a conjunction or simply placed next to each other" (p.125). This generalization may be correct, but in his examples Turner fails to distinguish between co-ordinate phrases, such as ***moane be aine*** 'the men and women', and appositive phrases, such as ***kita Manam*** 'we, Manam people'.

As mentioned above, there is no discussion in the book of syntax beyond the level of the phrase, save for a few general remarks. Even here one finds naive and misleading statements: "A sentence expresses a complete thought and can stand alone grammatically. It begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop, question mark, or exclamation mark." (p.127).

On the whole, the grammar is rather disappointing. Given its size and primary intended audience, one cannot expect an extensive and detailed treatment of the structure of Manam. One does wish, however, that the topics that have been included had been treated with more sophistication and care.