

David Scorza and Karl J. Franklin, *An advanced course in Tok Pisin*. Ukarumpa: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1989. ix + 158pp. K8.00.

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This book differs from most language courses in a number of ways:

1. It supplements another course in Tok Pisin written by Litteral in 1969;
2. It appears to be designed primarily for a special group of users, namely members of SIL who have had some exposure to SIL ways of analysing and learning languages.
3. "The course should be accepted as a preliminary one, in that it needs full refinement" (p. ix).
4. It is a work book with spaces for adding notes.
5. It is designed for people already in Papua New Guinea, not outsiders intending to go there.

The book is organised into three parts:

- (1) Overview (History, Grammar, Sociolinguistics)
- (2) Translations
- (3) Language Learning.

Within these sections we encounter further, sometimes unrelated subsections. My general impression is that their quality is fairly uneven. Next to well written and highly useful sections on history, readings or translation exercises, we encounter other sections that would seem to be confusing to learners. Thus, in the section titled 'Grammatical Features' some of the rules of pronunciation are very strange indeed. One asks oneself, for instance, whether the lengthened primary pronunciation of /a/ in the first syllable of *saksak*, *salim*, *tanim* and *papa* is due to Rule 1 as is claimed for *saksak* and *salim*, or Rule 2 as is claimed for *tanim* and *papa*.

The rules given are:

1. When /a/ occurs in a stressed syllable it generally takes the lengthened primary value.

Examples: *saksak, sap, salim, kapa, pato, wanem*

2. When /a/ occurs between like consonants (or consonants made at the same point of articulation), the primary value also occurs.

Examples: *tanim, mambu, mama, papa, planim, ranim*.

Similar confusion and multiplication of ad hoc rules is found in the treatment of the particle *i*. On page 23, for instance, we are informed that with regard to the example "*Pusi i ran, mi stap*" the particle *i* is not written following *mi* although it is following *pusi* "because both nouns end in the vowel /i/ the particle *i* combines into one pronounce vowel in both cases".

On page 31 in the section on Noun Phrases the authors comment on the fact that certain adjectives take on a different meaning depending on whether they are used predicatively or attributively. Their example, however, fails to bear out this observation: (40) "*Naispela klos*" becomes "*Klos i naispela*", i.e. "The clothes are nice" (p.31).

An equally confusing example, on the same page is the characterization of John in example (43) "*Jon, yu laik go long ples?*" "John, do you want to go home?" as a particle or sentence introducer. Surely categorial status and function in a construction need to be kept separate. Much clearer statements about these and other grammatical points are found in Dutton and Thomas's Revised Tok Pisin Course [= A New Course in Tok Pisin] (1985). A comment is also needed on the type of grammar this book encourages. On many counts it is quite conservative, ignoring, for instance, that *olsem* has long changed from a quotation marker (p.33) to a complementizer, that *ya* is used after nouns to designate definiteness or that a more progressive pronunciation of certain pronouns is widely encountered.

The authors of this book exhibit a healthy skepticism towards language teaching methods (p.110ff) and emphasises the pragmatic aspects of language learning. Their method is the grammar translation one combined with talk about language and its use. The method, whilst probably appropriate for the kind of audience this book is written for, would nevertheless profit from a better grading of the grammatical component, something which is relatively easy in the case of a Pidgin language. A sizeable body of information on the grading and ordering of grammatical rules of Tok Pisin is in existence and the authors could draw on it in future revisions.

I have found the translation exercises and comments on translation difficulties a particularly useful aspect of this book. I would, however like to remind readers of one of the shortcomings identified in Litteral's course by Don Laycock in his review in the January 1970 edition of *Pacific Islands Monthly* (p.46): "The user of this book will not be able to ask his way even to the most primitive village toilet; and the entire vocabulary of sex and its organs is also lamentably absent". Little has changed in the almost twenty years that have passed since, as a brief glance at the wordlist at the end of this course reveals.

A final point concerns editorial care. I am fully aware of the fact that my name is not always easy to spell for speakers of languages other than German. Nevertheless, I have come to expect a certain consistency in the misspellings of my name Scorza and Franklin in this short book manage to give six versions (pp.3, 5, 6, 7, 111, 113, and 116) as well as the correct spelling in a number of instances.\* Other spelling errors were observed throughout the text.

My conclusion about this course is that it is best employed in conjunction with Dutton and Thomas's 1985 course, rather than with the outdated Litteral 1969. Further development should be in the area of translation rather in that of grammar, as this would minimise the chance of repetition and overlap with existing publications.

[\*Editor's note: the reviewer lists each of the misspellings in Scorza and Franklin. I have listed the pages, rather than blatantly display our poor use of the spelling checker. We apologize to the reviewer and will correct the errors in the next editon. KJF]