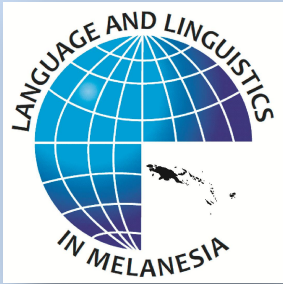




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EDITORIAL

Forty-four years ago (in October, 1967), the Linguistic Society of Papua and New Guinea (LSPNG) was formed at the University of Papua New Guinea “to promote the study of linguistics and to provide for its members a forum for discussion” (Kivung, Vol. 2 No. 1, 1969). The Society held “monthly meetings during the academic year, at which original papers were presented and special topics discussed” (ibid.). *Kivung* (originally, a four-monthly journal) came to be in April, 1968. Through the years, it grew in influence and reach. Renamed *Language & Linguistics in Melanesia (LLM)* in 1981-1982, the journal acquired even more popularity worldwide. One of the most important ambitions of its ‘pioneers’ was to train local Melanesian linguists.

The Linguistics programme at the University of Papua New Guinea is now staffed mostly by indigenous linguists, a testimony to Kivung/LLM founders’ efforts to awaken linguistic thought in Melanesia. After a rather prolonged hibernation,¹ the maiden online issue of LLM (Vol. 29, 2011) is unfolding in your browser, thanks to LSPNG conference decision² to revive the journal in the digital format.

The re-birth of LLM online (www.langlxmelanesia.com) is another living testament of LSPNG Founders’ success in engendering and nurturing Melanesian linguistics. Indigenous linguists of the region have now joined the ranks of the journal’s veteran editors and are ready to carry the torch ignited forty-four years ago. Linguistics in Melanesia has now found its voice in LLM online; the power of the Internet will make it heard around the world.

Kenneth M. Sumbuk
Managing Editor LLM
University of Papua New Guinea

EDITORIAL COMMENT

As the editor of what was then Kivung -- way back when ... -- I must admit to considerable disappointment when Kivung's successor, Language and Linguistics in Melanesia, ground to a halt and ceased publication. The languages of this part of the world reflect an amazing cultural heritage, an amazing diversity, and for these reasons alone they deserve their own journal.

It is thus a very great pleasure to see that LLM has at last been revived, and will be made available in its new online format. I congratulate all of those associated with the rising of the phoenix from the ashes, most notably Olga Temple, who has worked very hard to get LLM rolling again; and I wish all those associated with the journal the very best in their efforts to document the languages of our region.

John Lynch
Associate Editor LLM
Pacific Languages Unit, Vanuatu

¹ LLM Vol. 28, 1997 was the last link in the almost 30-year-long chain of publications

² September, 2011, hosted by SIL in Ukarumpa

Proceedings of the 2011 LSPNG Conference in Ukarumpa

THE (MIS)FORTUNES OF VERNACULAR LITERACY IN THE HULI LANGUAGE OF THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS PROVINCE (SHP)

Syd Gould

Evangelical Church of PNG (ECPNG)
smgould@tpg.com.au

ABSTRACT

This article¹ traces the historical development of vernacular literacy in the Huli language of the Southern Highlands (now Hela) Province,² with a particular focus on the work of the Asia Pacific Christian Mission and subsequently the indigenous Evangelical Church of Papua New Guinea, though reference will be made to other NGOs in the language group. It highlights both positive and negative factors which caused both success and decline in the historical period from the introduction of vernacular literacy to the present, factors such as orthography, motivation, the place of the Huli scriptures and other printed matter, the influence of education in English and the prestige attributed to both English and Pidgin; and will conclude with a comment on the current status and prospects of vernacular literacy in the Elementary Schools.

KEY WORDS: Huli language / vernacular literacy / NGOs / Missions/ APCM / ECPNG / literacy decline

INTRODUCTION

This article outlines the development and decline of a vernacular literacy programme in the Huli language. It delineates the three phases of development, and the fourth stage, a stage of declension. It highlights both positive and negative factors which caused both success and decline in the historical period from the commencement to the present, factors such as orthography, motivation, the place of the Huli Scriptures and other printed matter, the influence of education in English and the influence and use of Pidgin; and will conclude with a comment on the current status and prospects of vernacular literacy in the Elementary Schools.

But before launching into discussion, it is necessary to give some background setting and context against which to understand it: demographic information on the Huli and the type of mission (and missionaries) who were instrumental in developing literacy amongst the Huli.

THE HULI

The Huli language group currently numbers at least 150,000 speakers, probably closer to 200,000³ - though at the time of initial contact estimated at less than half that number (Glasse 1968:18) - and

traditionally inhabiting the intra-montane valleys and slopes of the Tagali River drainage system at an altitude of between 4500 and 6500 feet towards the north-western end of the Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea. Although a number of exploratory patrols had traversed the area in the mid- to late 1930s, the intervention of World War II delayed the setting up of an administrative patrol post and the construction of an air-field until 1952. During the initial phases of pacification by the Australian administration's patrol officers, missionaries were allowed entry but were restricted to a radius of three kilometres from the patrol post at the air-field.

THE ASIA PACIFIC CHRISTIAN MISSION

The first two missionaries to enter were representatives of the Methodist Overseas Mission and the Unevangelized Fields Mission. The Unevangelized Fields Mission (UFM),⁴ initially in the Western Province in 1931, and later the land of the Huli⁵ in 1953 shortly after 'pacification' by the Australian colonial Administration. The mission belongs in the stream of nondenominational / interdenominational, evangelical, faith missionary organizations which arose from the mid-nineteenth century Evangelical Awakening and the formation of 'faith' missions under J. Hudson Taylor of China Inland Mission (CIM) renown. In the early 1970s the name was changed to the Asia Pacific Christian Mission (APCM). This is the name I shall use for this paper, regardless of the era.

The ethos of the Mission fits in perfectly with Bebbington's quadrilateral of characteristics of Evangelicalism (Bebbington 1989), an important one being 'biblicism'. The pioneer missionaries had all completed Bible School and the Summer Institute of Linguistics. Mission policy also mandated that missionaries become proficient in the languages of the people groups where they were located. So, together with the intense activism of demonstrating and verbally explaining the Good News of God's love in the Lord Jesus Christ using the Huli language, missionaries were intent on translating the message of the Bible and helping people to read.

During the early 1950s four major mission societies entered the Tari area: the above mentioned evangelical missions, the Catholics, and the SDAs. By the end of the 60s, the missions (APCM in particular) had made a significant impact on Huli society (Frankel 1986:33, 34); (Goldman 1981:21). Initial baptism of Christian converts took place very early in the 60s for both Evangelical missions. Recent statistics indicate a baptised adult membership of well in excess of five thousand, giving perhaps an adult adherence of eight to ten thousand in 150 local congregations within the ECPNG. Proportionately, United Church membership figures would be comparable, as would also those of the Christian Brethren Church, of the Wesleyan Church in the Koroba sub-province and, no doubt, those of

the adult component of Catholic adherence. The national census records an adherence to Christianity in the Huli area well over 90%.⁶

The year following UFM's entry into the Huli tribe, mission linguists and early teachers at the Australian Summer Institute of Linguistics, Joan and Murray Rule⁷ analysed the Huli language, producing a phonology and spelling system, as well as a pedagogical grammar (1954a; 1954b). Among many other missionary activities was literacy in the Huli language. Literacy classes in the Huli language were commenced early, as was the translation of particular verses and passages from the Bible. The first New Testament book to be translated was the Gospel of Mark, a co-operative effort by APCM and Methodist missionaries, and printed by the Methodist Press in Rabaul in the early 1960s. From the mid-1960s all translated portions of Scripture were published successively by the Bible Society, the culmination being the single, bound volume of the Huli New Testament in 1983. This New Testament was received enthusiastically by many thousands of Huli Christians.⁸

The technology of literacy entered Huli society with the duties of both the Australian Administration's Patrol Officers and the missionaries, because it was an integral part of the western way of doing things. Specific instruction in literacy in Huli for the Huli, however, commenced with the Evangelical missions in an informal way along with the instruction of groups of interested inquirers of the Christian message. Instruction remained semi-formal as Huli evangelist-teachers itinerated or shared the things that they had been learning with their own kin. It progressively became more structured in classes for converts and baptismal candidates as they memorized Bible verses and learnt Bible stories. Literacy instruction, as with other oral instruction, was in the Huli language.

THE NATIONAL SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT

During the early years of establishing a mission presence and work amongst the Huli missionaries of mission societies felt the pressure of the Australian Administration to prepare the country for self-government and nationhood. Because so little had been done in education, relatively speaking, before WW2, Australian administrators diffused the urgency of education. McCarthy declared that 'for a people to take its place in the modern world they must be taught to read and write' (McCarthy 1968:121). By this he meant both schooling and the medium of English. To him, as with others in the employ of the Australian Administration, '[i]t was clear that the Government could not achieve its plans for education without help, and so it was decided that the missions should receive grants of money which would be used for mission schools' (1968:124). It was also clear to McCarthy that it would be impossible to

provide schooling for 'the masses,' who, in his opinion, would need to remain within their traditional subsistence mode of living. It was within this ideological and framework that missions were pressured or enticed into the national education scheme.

Even in the remoter districts of the Western Province and the Southern Highlands the APCM felt the effects.

The mission's language failures were serious enough to attract the attention of the new Area Education Officer at Daru. Many of the missionaries who argued for vernacular education were, he found, far from fluent in the vernacular themselves. Ken McKinnon, who would one day become Director of Education for Papua New Guinea, was appalled at the education situation in the Western District and resolved to do something about it. By pestering Port Moresby for teachers he started a string of government schools along the coast and in the Fly estuary. Next he started a school at Balimo's new government station, a challenge to the entrenched mission domination of Balimo which was bitterly resented. By government policy the school educated in English, calling the mission's vernacular education policy into question. (Prince 1981:126).

Not that there had been a coherent policy. Missionaries opened 'schools', sometimes in response to popular demand, but mainly to teach the reading of the Scriptures. Unfortunately few of the newer centres had any basic reading materials. Reading was taught from whatever Scriptures happened to have been translated, however difficult they might be in concept and vocabulary. Some centres began teaching the people Gogodala, so as to give access to the relatively plentiful Scriptures in that language and this tendency towards a church lingua franca was reinforced by any Christians from outlying tribes who had been trained in the Gogodala Bible School.⁹

Ken McKinnon was infuriated by such tunnel vision. What use was Gogodala to a Zimakani or an Aekyom? The only foreign language of any value was English, which was the chosen language of education and government service. He urged the mission to get into English education and to use Alwyn Neuendorf to head up the programme. For though Neuendorf's programme was in Gogodala, McKinnon recognised its educational value. Neuendorf, now that he had finished training the pastors in the Balimo school as teachers, saw the need to move into English. When he transferred to Awaba in 1959 he started a first group on a grade 3 English programme. The majority of his colleagues felt he had been sidetracked from his spiritual call, but in fact he was leading the mission into the future (Prince 1981:125-6).

Nevertheless, under the leadership of such a self-disciplined, hard-working and visionary educator as Alwyn Neuendorf not only was an English-speaking school set up, but a teacher training college was commenced to train indigenous students to qualify as teachers in order to staff the rapidly increasing number of Mission schools (Prince 1981).

In the Huli region, pioneer missionary Alan Sinclair, an accomplished Huli-speaker, completed the special 'S course' of teacher training in 1959. By 1960 he was teaching a class of young Huli men¹⁰ in

school in the mornings and in the afternoons supervising pit-sawing to provide timber for the building programme on the station, which included his own home. Sinclair's involvement in this school arena however was of shorter duration. The skills, nevertheless, stood him in good stead for his next educational venture – the Huli 'Bible' School.¹¹ Sinclair used the Huli language as medium of communication and as the language of instruction in the school. Under his tutelage these students learned to read and write the Huli vernacular.

By the middle of the decade, however, two other factors emerged which had long term implications. Those mission schools which were receiving government grants-in-aid were required to use only English in the school programmes. In addition, the Mission teacher training programme used English as the medium of instruction and produced trained teachers who conducted classes in English according to Government policy.

VERNACULAR LITERACY AMONGST THE HULI

The development of vernacular literacy, at least vernacular reading, must be seen diachronically in its historical and cultural settings, both of which were changing rapidly.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

For the sake of analysis the historical development of vernacular literacy may be divided into three major phases: the pioneering phase, the fragmentation phase, and the centralized phase. Then came a fourth phase, attrition, which succeeded the third and which has motivated this analysis.

PHASE 1. THE PIONEER PHASE¹²

Huli vernacular literacy emerged in the context of Mission ideology and practice. This initial phase commenced at Walidegemabu / Halongoali soon after a number of women indicated an interest in the teachings they had heard from the missionaries. The first women missionaries, Eva Twyman, Val Sinclair and Joan Erkkila, although having a very elementary grasp of the Huli language, commenced instruction for the women in the late afternoons once or twice a week.

The reason for the classes being held only for women was two-fold. First, the missionary men were busily engaged in pit-sawing and building homes that there was little time for teaching reading. Secondly, without a male instructor, and with women in attendance, it was unthinkable that Huli men should attend classes.¹³ Classes were held during the last hour of daylight, because Huli women were not free from their engagement in gardening activities and tending children and pigs. Thus, by request of the Huli women,

the classes were fitted in, without disruption to the schedule of their working day and family responsibilities.

Early instruction used a purely phonics approach and the syllable method. The syllable method did not require great language fluency skills or pedagogy skills of the instructors, nor was much material required – just a chalkboard, a chart, or flash cards. Syllables were drilled according to rhyme and family categories: syllables which commence with the same initial letter are known as ‘syllable families’; these rhyme and family categories were displayed, pointed to and sounded out. The process was repeated, with occasional oral testing, until all the syllables were readily recognized by the students. At each stage, appropriate short words were built using the known syllables.

Later, primers or reading booklets¹⁴ were produced using sentence frames, which repeated the initial sentence, substituting only one word, usually a noun. For example, ‘I am going to _____’ would be a sample frame. This method of designing primers was advocated at language learning courses for missionaries during the 1950s.

With the commencement of a second mission station at Walete, a similar pattern and method continued. Joan Erkkila taught classes to women while her husband Jim was engaged in sawing timber and building construction.

At this juncture an analysis is in order. Two or three aspects need attention: the pedagogical / andragogical aspect, the socio-cultural aspect, and the ideological aspect. The teaching of the literacy using the syllable method was effective only to a limited degree. For initially learning to read the text of a language with a transparent orthography¹⁵ it is excellent for the acquisition of decoding skills. The Huli alphabet has only nineteen letters and is, as with most of the languages in PNG given an alphabet, a shallow or transparent orthography, which means direct correlation between graphemes and phonemes. But unless instruction and practice in semantic attack skills is provided as well, new readers will be so concentrating on grapho-phonetic decoding, they do not even understand the words they are pronouncing. Secondly, the missionaries were sensitive to the socio-cultural context, and provided the instruction classes at times and venues which did not disrupt the daily activities of the Huli learners. Thirdly, the venue for instruction was in the new ‘religious space’ and was perceived to be for that specific purpose, that is, the reading of Scripture.

PHASE 2. FRAGMENTATION

During the second phase three things came into being which affected the teaching of reading. First, schools for children were commenced; and second, Val Sinclair developed a set of primer-readers based on the prevailing ‘fad’ of the time, the ‘whole word’ approach; and third, local churches were being established and other stations were opened up, including Benalia, to the south, and Malanda to the south-west.

The expansion of the 1960s occurred rapidly. The first Christians from the Halongoali parish in the Tari area were eager to share their new-found faith, and many accompanied missionaries on their evangelistic patrols. Because Hulis were communicating in the vernacular and explaining the relevance of the message in practical terms, in the newer areas there was not the lengthy period before others ‘converted’ to Christianity and became interested in reading. Literacy classes were established early. Village pastors exiting the Bible school had been instructed in the teaching of literacy and were expected to do so as they took up their pastoral appointments.

The commencement of schools for ‘children’ initially used the vernacular as the medium of instruction, and the subjects were basic – reading, writing and arithmetic. These ‘children’ were young men. Relatives would not allow girls to attend school, because they were needed to help with the gardening and tending the pigs. Huli culture did not allow for socializing or intermingling of the sexes, especially during the years of puberty. One of the benefits of the schools in the early period was that the young men learned to read early and were able to help teach adults. By the mid-1960s, however, it became mandatory that all instruction in schools be given in English. Non-Huli teachers were placed in classrooms, and instruction in vernacular literacy for children virtually ceased. Vernacular literacy shrank to the domain of teaching adults.

Further fragmentation emerged within the literacy programmes themselves. The districts were isolated from each other. Some chose to remain teaching the syllable method, others followed the new scheme. The new ‘whole word’ scheme, or the ‘look-say’ method came into prominence in Australia in the early 1960s, Professor Fred Schonell of the University of Queensland being the chief architect and ardent advocate in the Queensland education system. The psycho-linguistic theory undergirding this approach was simply that instantaneous recognition of whole words,¹⁶ without the process of ‘decoding’, enabled learners to read sentences ‘with comprehension’ very early, stimulating interest and motivation.

An analysis of this period reveals that severe fragmentation of literacy instruction occurred. Geographically and socially, although still Huli, the districts were isolated from each other. Pedagogically, different methods were being used. The syllable method produced slow readers, who did not always comprehend the meaning of the text they were reading. The ‘whole word’ approach was inefficient in an ideal context where the language was written phonically. In addition the ‘whole word’ approach required much more expertise on the part of the ‘instructors’ if they were to attempt to carry the responsibility themselves – an expertise which they just did not have, and which the missionaries were not able to inculcate in them by courses of training. It also required much more material in the form of charts, flash cards, and readers. The production of these materials and the preparation required for classes was time consuming for the missionaries involved, and almost impossible for Huli people themselves to take on.

PHASE 3. CENTRALIZATION, UNIFICATION, & THE PRODUCTION OF EFFECTIVE MATERIALS & INSTRUCTORS

The Huli New Testament was published as a single volume 1983. During the preceding decade the oversight and supervision of the vernacular literacy programme was under the jurisdiction of a single person, one who had both fluency in Huli and educational qualifications in teaching, namely, me. Having already observed the fragmented nature of the literacy approaches in the different districts, the methods of literacy pedagogy lying at opposite poles of the spectrum, the ineffectiveness of the programmes in terms of hours needed in preparation of materials, and the lack of skilled Huli instructors, I undertook to do four things: to unify the programme; to produce printed materials that would be more efficient and effective in the context of an orthographically transparent language; to produce materials that would teach students right from the beginning that the underlying reason for literacy, like oral communication, is to convey meaning; and to educate and train instructors with suitable instructional skills to produce literates with minimal supervision, but with the needed encouragement for psychological reinforcement. The programme which was designed at this stage is outlined in one of my own documents and briefly described in non-technical terms, in the early stages of its implementation (Gould 1975). Not only did this programme effect the unification of the literacy programmes in the districts in which there were ECPNG churches, but extended, by request, to ‘sister’ Evangelical churches: the United Church in the Tari District, the Kristen Brata Sios at Koroba, and the Wesleyan Church at Fugwa. Not only was the aim of training skilled instructors achieved, but Huli supervisors were also trained to conduct itinerant supervisory visits of instructors and trainee instructors, but were able to conduct training courses as well.¹⁷

During the decade in focus, this programme became the largest and most successful vernacular literacy programme in the Southern Highlands Province. In-built into the programme was a proficiency test which had two parts: testing of reading skills (without requiring writing), and a test of writing skills. Unlike the assumption of not a few missionaries and national pastors who believed that one could gauge the literacy skill level of a reader by listening to their oral performance, the tests were designed to directly assess comprehension rather than oral production. This is because readers of a language with a transparent orthography are able to perform the ‘mechanics’ of reading, that is, decoding the symbols and producing the appropriate sounds without necessarily comprehending what is being ‘read’, not only at the sentence level, but even sometimes at the word level. The purpose of this fairly objective testing was two-fold. Firstly, it was being required of those making application for training at the Bible Training Centre that they be able to both read and write. This was a standardized and reasonably objective method of achieving that assessment. Secondly, instructors were ‘rewarded’ with a small amount of money only when they produced literates¹⁸ The programme was ‘goal oriented’ and ‘outcome focussed’, a feature of much post-secondary, but non-university, training in Australia and New Zealand in the second half of the nineteenth century.

After only three years engagement in developing the literacy programme my complete vision was cut short by a summons to be engaged in another training programme. Nevertheless, I did continue to work on other projects related to literacy, not the least of which was to develop a pre-school literacy programme. This was in the era before the Tok Ples Pre-Schools promoted by Brian Kemelfield (Delpit and Kemelfield 1985) came into prominence on the national scene. Huli children had available to them the one year vernacular pre-school programme, and the primary school teachers spoke in glowing terms of children entering their school with developed literacy skills.

OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORICAL PROCESS

Vernacular literacy for the Huli was not required in order for them either to hear the Christian message or for them to become members of the church. Christianity for the Huli commenced within a completely vernacular oral framework. Out of this oral framework emerged the ‘written’ biblical memory verses along with the orally memorized verses, and simple Bible stories began to be produced. These printed Bible stories were not designed for communication purposes – they had heard the stories – but for an introduction to learning to read, and, in part, ‘memory joggers’. In a similar vein, the worship songs in church were learned in the oral context and memorized, and then came the production of the Church Song Book (hymnal). Literate practice appears to be complementary to the oral and in a symbiotic relationship to it.

LITERATE PRACTICE

Investigation and assessment of literate practice of the Huli has never been fully undertaken - at least, not in the way that Heath conducted her ground-breaking investigative study of three communities in the U.S.A. (Heath 1983). The only research of literacy and literate practice among the Huli was conducted by Apelis in the 1980s, during the decade in which the Huli New Testament was released as a single volume. (Apelis 1985, 1986a, 1986b, 1987, 1988). That it occurred during the decade of the release of the Huli New Testament can hardly be called significant for general research on literacy, because it has a number of deficiencies, which will be discussed shortly. More significantly it was conducted during the period when the Southern Highlands Province was particularly in focus for assessing adult and non-formal literacy programmes in the attempt by many NGOs to access more finance from the Non-formal Education Unit which had been created. Reports from the Huli area indicated a strong literacy thrust and the Huli Literacy Programme under the auspices of the then ECP was asking for the 'lion's share' of the funding. So, it was fitting that a proper assessment be undertaken. While the findings and interpretation might not reach the standard of validity required for such sociological research, the research is significant, in one way, because it was undertaken at the time of the release of the Huli New Testament, the literate use of which is the central theme of this thesis. The ECP's Huli Literacy Programme had just passed its peak impact and was in decline, mainly because the Programme's supervising officer was no longer present. Nevertheless the Programme had produced thousands of literates who were anxious to procure and read their New Testament. This was the context in which the Apelis research was conducted. As a piece of sociological field work, however, it falls short and is somewhat disappointing.

The deficiencies of Apelis' research mainly fall into the category of 'validity'. Three NGO communities operating literacy were selected: The Kristen Brata Sios (KBS) at Guala, Koroba; the ECP at Walete, between Tari and Koroba; and the Uniting Church (UC) at Hoyabia, near Tari. As part of the assessment, tests were administered to a selected number of those who had supposedly completed literacy education in the then current programmes. These tests covered both reading comprehension and writing in three languages, Huli, Tok Pisin, and English. For comparative purposes the very selection of the locations had inherent biases. KBS and UC stations were larger centres where there had been larger numbers of English-speaking expatriates with whom the participants had been able to relate, and were also in relative close proximity to government administrative offices and commercial centres. This was a highly significant factor in the acquisition of languages other than Huli for those communities. At Walete, the missionaries all spoke Huli. At Koroba the missionaries were Pidgin-speakers, and at Hoyabia a large portion of the expatriate community had interacted in English. In addition, at Koroba, there was a thrust in Pidgin literacy through the use of the 'Kisim Save' literacy primers and programme. These biases are

reflected in the compared results of literacy in the different languages. Even further, when investigation was carried out concerning those participants at Walete who had been assessed, it was discovered that many had not been products of the Huli Literacy Programme.

A second inadequacy was that the literacy testing apparatus varied in standard for the three languages. For instance, the English test was far simpler and easier than the Huli test. Later investigation by a separate investigator revealed that it was easily completed by students in Grade Two, whose knowledge of English as a second language was severely restricted. On the other hand, some items in the Huli language reading test were in a genre unknown to the Huli readers. This is significant because, as was pointed out above, literacy is both genre-dependent and discipline-specific.

A third deficiency is revealed in that it did not consider the *function* of vernacular literacy in Huli society. As was pointed out above, literacy in Huli society has little to do with writing, the major function being to read the Huli Scriptures and related literature.

A functional approach to Huli literacy is needed. This functional approach has been exemplified by Heath (Heath 1983, 1986a, 1986b 1984, Heath and Branscombe 1986), and there is an urgent need for an investigation using this approach of Huli literacy. This present paper, however, does not purport to undertake a general research of Huli literacy using that approach. Nevertheless, it does take seriously the functional approach to literacy in investigating those who use their vernacular literacy skills in Huli Scripture use.

FUNCTIONAL LITERACY AND PURPOSEFUL READING

Integrally linked to functional literacy is purposeful reading (and writing). It is general knowledge that human behaviour is purposeful, even if not detectable at the conscious level. This applies to literacy. If individual Huli do not perceive vernacular literacy filling any felt need or functional purpose, then they will not expend the time and energy needed for its acquisition¹⁹ – which applies to most of the population. On the other hand, Christians who desire to read the vernacular Scriptures see both purpose and function. But we must not then jump to the false conclusion that all vernacular literacy is religious. There are other publications available with general knowledge content. These are also eagerly read. But here we are considering primary motivation, purpose, and function.

How Christians read the Huli Scriptures was part of my larger research (Gould 2005), which uncovered not only the percentage of church attenders who possessed the vernacular Scriptures, but also, as a result of personal interviews, just what personal reading of the Scriptures meant to them. Many expressed how

God/the Holy Spirit had spoken to them, opened their understanding to spiritual truth, and had given them peace and joy. That research was carried out in the 1990s, when only the New Testament was available. Now that the complete vernacular Bible is available, it would be profitable to conduct a second round of research and compare results.

Christian women are by far the greater section of the population who use the Bible. This is greatly encouraged and facilitated by the women's fellowship groups, who use study booklets to guide their study of the vernacular Bible. The women who participate in these groups number approximately two and a half thousand in the ECPNG alone. A recent reprinting of a study booklet numbered 3,000. These booklets, of course, will also be used by women in other churches.

A second group who are engaged in literate acts, whether of true literacy or 'reading-like behaviour' (see Holdaway 1979; Holdaway 1988) is the Sunday School. ECPNG has more than 5,000 scholars, and produces activity booklets for these scholars, at least enough for the scholars who are able to use them.

So, even though vernacular literacy has been in the decline phase, there is still a large section of the population engaged in vernacular literate practice. Sales of literacy primer kit sets also attest to Huli still desiring to learn to read. The cumulative total of successive reprints of these kits exceeds 22,000. That in itself indicates something about the measure of the programme.

NEGATIVE INFLUENCES

Let us now turn to the negative influences on the motivation to acquire Huli vernacular literacy, and the reason why I titled this paper 'The **(mis)**fortunes of vernacular literacy'. I would like to suggest nine of these historical negative contingencies. I am tempted to say 'ten', but the tenth one is not so much an historical event but the a-historical inherent 'oral bias', which I shall deal with first, before addressing the other nine.

ORAL BIAS

In contrast with our Western literary or literate bias, Huli society, as with Melanesia in general, has an oral bias²⁰ which is common to small-scale, face-to-face societies. This oral bias still applies even when people learn to read and are classified as literate. In pre-contact time Huli society had no literate practice, and following the introduction of literacy, there is still no perceived purpose for vernacular literate practice. All that needs to be communicated in Huli can be done orally. This inherent bias militates against the motivation for becoming literate in the vernacular – with one exception: within the Christian community the desire to read the translated Scriptures is a powerful motivation.

1. SCHOOLING SOLELY IN ENGLISH

Following the 1955 directive of an 'English only' policy in schools, many Huli children, particularly from the early 60s onwards, entered school without any prior vernacular literacy and completed their schooling entirely in English. This meant that without provision of pre-school literacy students could complete their schooling and still not be literate in their mother tongue. This resulted in two significant negative factors: firstly, students did not want to engage in vernacular literate practice; and secondly, when called upon to write notices, minutes of meetings, and so forth, they were confused in their spelling. This latter completely negated the purpose of the written communication for new vernacular literates.

2. OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE / INTERVENTION

The 60s were bad enough, but during the 70s well-intentioned personnel brought about the use of Non-formal Education funds to subsidise literacy in the Southern Highlands. To receive these subsidies institutions had to provide figures of enrolments and outcomes. It was too tempting for many. Figures submitted were inflated. And within the ECPNG the co-ordinator of literacy in the region paid a special visit to Mendi to collect the funds and then used them for his own election campaign.

The succeeding officer of the Non-formal Education Unit reversed operational policies and believed that the proper approach to literacy was the Freirean approach. It was his stated aim to wrest literacy from the missions. He ran courses to which literacy supervisors were asked to attend. When queried about the difference between the earlier programme in Huli and the new approach one particular supervisor stated that there was no real difference in method, except that literacy workers now could get paid direct from Non-formal Education, rather than through the agency.

Needless to say, this intrusion from outside had a detrimental effect and the Huli vernacular literacy programme went into decline.

3. NO ONE WITH VISION TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROMOTION AND SUPPORT

Following the cessation of the short-term funding subsidies from the Non-formal Education Unit, no money was available to support the vernacular literacy programme. Some, teachers and supervisors who had recently had a taste of money, withdrew from the programme. Inquiries into funding for subsidies proved fruitless. The pre-school vernacular literacy classes were outside the domain of responsibility of the Education Department. And the ECPNG church leaders in the Huli region believed that literacy was not 'their' responsibility: it was a 'school' (education) matter, so they refused to take responsibility for even the adult programme. This decision stands in stark contrast to the validity of two strong themes: the

first being that mentioned above regarding motivation and purpose for reading coupled with the only real domain for functional literacy in the vernacular in the Huli language group being in the church community; and the second is the missiological insight of Donald McGavran, that the proper place for teaching literacy is in the local church (McGavran 1980).

4. PRESTIGE OF OTHER LANGUAGES – ENGLISH & PIDGIN

With the increase of the number of Huli children being enrolled in school with its English-speaking environment, and the rise of a national consciousness and identity, in which Pidgin-speaking became a symbol, the prestige of these two languages relegated the literate use of the vernacular to an inferior position.

5. THE REACTION & ATTITUDE OF THOSE SCHOOLED IN ENGLISH

Those who were being, or had been, schooled in English, while still speaking their vernacular, despised the literate use of it. Many were confused about how to write it, and often wrote it wrongly. The reasons for this are given in detail in my analytical article published in the *PNG Journal of Education* (see Gould 2001)). This problem was further exacerbated when in the last decade and a half many of these students became Elementary teachers (see number seven below). Other students reacted very strongly to the use of diacritics, simply because these are not used in either English or Pidgin.

6. THE MYTH THAT VERNACULAR USE IS NOT HELPFUL FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

During the hey-day of 'English only', many schools administered some sort of discipline for students speaking vernacular in the precincts of the school. The myth was that continued use of the vernacular was detrimental to progress in the acquisition of English. However, what gave the lie to that myth was the standard of literacy skills of students entering Primary School who had completed the one-year Pre-school Vernacular Literacy Programme. Even today, those students are far ahead of those coming out of Elementary School after three years. Some more astute parents have approached Primary School authorities, asking permission for their children to enter grade three without ever having been to Elementary, and the authorities not only allow it, but welcome it.

7. THE INTRODUCTION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLING

In the Huli language group the introduction of Elementary schooling has been an unmitigated disaster, from two points of view. Firstly, teachers who did not know how to write their own language brought real confusion to their students in the vernacular literacy section. In one case a mother, who was a vernacular literacy teacher, reported to me that her daughter had to correct her teacher in writing Huli. In many

Primary schools teachers complained to me about the poor standard of literacy skills of Elementary students entering grade three.

The second prong to the disaster was that many parents were choosing to send their children to Elementary, simply because it was cheaper per year: and enrolments in Pre-school Vernacular Literacy classes dropped. Well trained vernacular literacy teachers, most of whom had little or no formal schooling, were chagrined because unskilled teachers were drawing a salary, while they, with all their skills and experience, were not allowed in.

8. THE INTRODUCTION OF MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones sold like the proverbial hot cakes. It did not take the Huli long to master the technology – at least that which was required for oral communication. The “each one teach one” motto of the renowned literacy educator of yesteryear, Frank Laubach (Laubach 1964; Laubach & Laubach 1960), certainly proved effective not in literacy but in spreading the use of mobile phones. Mobile phone technology could also have been a boon for literacy if the Huli themselves had also taken to ‘texting’. It would have also saved them a lot of money with the mobile telco Digicel daily offering eighteen free SMSs after the initial two each day. But texting never gained widespread use. The ‘oral bias’ prevailed over the cost. Then, too, there is no predictive text for Huli as there is in English. Of course, exacerbating this has been the long-standing unreliability and untrustworthiness of the postal service, which has done nothing to enhance literate communication.

9. THE INTRODUCTION OF ORAL RECORDINGS FOR WIDESPREAD DISSEMINATION

This is the most recent. There are two main technologies involved here. The first is that of the organization ‘Faith Comes by Hearing’. Audio dramatized versions of Huli Scripture have already been digitally recorded and will soon be made available cheaply through the medium of mass-produced playback units. The second is that of the proposed community FM radio station. Already field recordists have begun recording, and programming has commenced in preparation for the time when hardware is in place for the transmission to occur. The ECPNG national president was heard to have cynically remarked, ‘Another reason to hinder people reading their Bibles’.

In listing this last detraction, I am in no way decrying the positive benefits which will derive from these technologies. But our focus here is on those negative historical interventions which have detracted from the acquisition and use of vernacular literacy.

Literacy itself has not been abandoned by the educated and semi-educated amongst the Huli. But the word literacy itself should not be used in isolation from the particular language of its use. For instance one may be literate in Tok Pisin but not in Huli. So it is that those Huli who received schooling in English continue to use their acquired literacy skills – but only in English, not Huli. The bundles of newspapers which arrive on the daily Air Niugini flight from Port Moresby are eagerly snapped up, and one observes many individuals standing around the town area absorbing the latest news. Maybe if there had been the financial backing to produce a vernacular newspaper, it would have achieved similar results. Maybe one of the drawbacks has been the lack of published materials – though the number of publications in Huli is considerable, and literates like to get hold of these (by fair or foul means – preferably foul) and eagerly read. Three books of reading comprehension exercises were produced with very durable covers, had print runs of over 1,000 each. These were not for sale, but were to be returned after use in advanced literacy classes. Of these, one title has only a couple of copies left, which I managed to scavenge, and a second but a couple of dozen, the rest presumably having been stolen.

In connection with the supply of published material, ‘book floods’ have been suggested (Elley 1996; Waters 2000) as an aid for literacy development and retention of literacy skills. However, such a strategy needs huge financial backing.

CONCLUSION

By way of summary and in conclusion, I have outlined the development of a reasonably successful vernacular literacy programme amongst the Huli, a prime motivating factor being the desire for Christians to read the translated Scriptures and associated material. But the programme could have been extremely successful, had it not been for at least nine negative factors.

The way forward at this point of time is to concentrate on the expanding Elementary School programme: to make appropriate modifications to the vernacular language and literacy sections of Elementary and Lower Primary, and to produce teachers who both know how to read and write Huli and are trained in instructional skills. For over eight years I have sought an entry into helping in this way, but have been denied access. A recent joint submission by the district schools inspector at Tari and myself has been delivered to authorities, but is in jeopardy because of the change of government and its minister for education. Should this attempt fail, we can expect not only further decline in vernacular literacy amongst the Huli, but resistance to its use, which is not a very optimistic note on which to conclude.

END NOTES

¹ A considerable amount of the introductory material in this paper is taken from my PhD thesis (2005). The main thrust concerning observations of the factors militating against the acquisition and use of vernacular literacy, however, is new material.

² After decades of agitating and lobbying the Huli are in the process of having their own Hela province – the North-Western part of the Southern Highlands - which will include smaller neighbouring language groups.

³ It is difficult to accurately obtain accurate numbers of Huli speakers, because national census divisions do not coincide with boundaries of the language group. Secondly, many Huli are in diaspora, mainly in urban areas. Thirdly, many people of adjacent language groups are bi-lingual in Huli as well as their own vernacular. Huli missionary pastors to places like Edolo and Walagu have taken the initiative to teach not only oral Huli but use the Huli literacy material because at the time no other materials existed. Figures quoted by the United Bible Society and in *Ethnologue* are entirely outdated.

⁴ The historical streams which led to the formation of the UFM and its subsequent mission activity amongst the Gogodala of the Western Province of Papua New Guinea is documented by Weymouth(1978).. See also Garrett (1992:335-337) for a brief summary by an ecumenical historian.

⁵ UFM's entry into Huli society and the beginnings of the Evangelical Church is found in Twyman (1966). A more complete historical overview of the development of the work of APCM in Papua New Guinea and the Evangelical Church of Papua New Guinea are found in Prince and Prince (1981).

⁶ This figure is based upon nominal adherence in the sociological sense. The issue of nominal adherence *vis a vis* conversion experience and membership is addressed as part of my thesis (2005).

⁷ A case study of the Rules is most instructive, and certainly throws light on the ethos of the Mission, especially in regard to their understanding of the nature of specific 'call' and the way the Holy Spirit works. During a life-time of service in the mission they performed linguistic analyses on more than two dozen languages in Papua New Guinea and Irian Jaya - all this in addition to their work on the translation of the Foe Scriptures and, as the sole missionary couple, the maintenance of a remote station at Lake Kutubu.

⁸ The reception of the Huli New Testament and the underlying motivations promoted by mission strategy is documented in my Masters Dissertation (1986).

⁹ Neuendorf (1977) explains the use of Gogodala as a 'church' language in the compendium by Stefan Wurm. The use of 'missionary lingua franche' for both church and schooling in PNG was not uncommon, given the huge number of languages and dialects in PNG. See, for example, Taylor (1977). In Papua Motu was used (Taylor 1977), not only by missionaries, but by traders and government officers, as well as Papuans themselves in their trading. In New Guinea the Lutheran Mission also promoted Kate as the 'church' language (Renck. 1977).

¹⁰ At first Huli parents did not allow their daughters to attend school, and young boys were considered not to have developed proper thinking and reasoning ability, so initially the students were male adolescents or young men. The writer well records his own introduction to the Huli classroom in 1966, when there was only one girl in grade three.

¹¹ At this stage there were no printed portions of the vernacular Bible.

¹² Information on the pioneer phase was obtained by personal interviews with Val Sinclair (2002) and Joan Erkkila (2005).

¹³ In traditional Huli thinking there were two issues: (i) women were dangerous to male virility (compare Lakoff 1987) so the least contact the better; (ii) women were not regarded as equals, in particular not intellectual equals.

¹⁴ Although search has been made, none of these original literacy primers could be located. However, Joan Erkkila assures me that it was so.

¹⁵ This term is used of languages which have a spelling system which ideally meets the two criteria, one symbol for each phoneme and only one phoneme for each symbol.

¹⁶ In terms of Gestalt psychological theory it is recognized that in the early developmental stages children recognize objects as 'gestalts' (wholes) without necessarily identifying the details. When applied to reading, whole words are recognized by their patterned shapes without identifying individual letters. Particularly important in these patterns are the ascenders and descenders of consonant letters. This principle also applies to the way expert readers operate: not only do they not read individual letters, but quite often do not read every word.

¹⁷ There are a few areas in the design of the programme which could possibly attract criticism, not the least of which are: the use of a set of primers and the training in instruction which does not appear to attempt a match with 'traditional' teaching and learning styles, as Stringer purports to do (Stringer 1984, 1987; Stringer & Faraclas 1987). I am not unaware of such criticisms, and have reasoned and practical responses to them; but they are far too lengthy to be included within the scope of this paper.

¹⁸ The *bi yobage*, or metaphor / parable, which the superintendent put forward was that of the market, where sellers are paid by the quality and quantity of the produce, not by the time spent working in the garden to produce it. Amongst some Huli people, however, there was a strong resistance to that particular model, preferring the model of the Community School where teachers received a regular salary from the Education Department, regardless of outcomes. But the literacy programme did not have the financial resources to operate that way, even if it had been a preferred model, which, in the view of the superintendent, it definitely was not.

¹⁹ Embedded in this subconscious approach is the relevance theory of communication as explained by Sperber and Wilson (1987), which in essence says that the receptor of any communication will evaluate how relevant it is to him- or herself and how much mental energy will be required to process it. The higher the former and the lower the latter the more readily the communication is attended to and processed.

²⁰ I am indebted to Maxey (2010) who advocates a new perspective on the role of orality in Bible translation as contextualization.

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HIGHLANDS SUNG TALES: Interdisciplinary Research on a Distinctive Art Form

Don Niles

Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies
dniles.ipngs@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

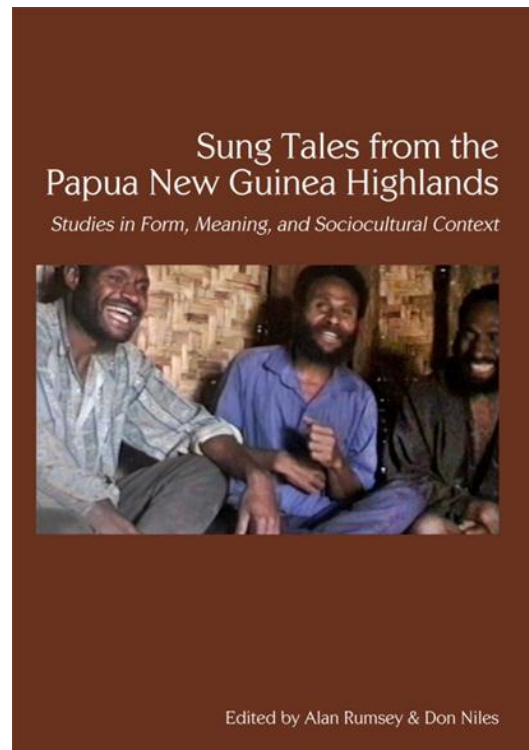
In parts of Southern Highlands, Enga, and Western Highlands Provinces of Papua New Guinea, interdisciplinary research has been undertaken on a form of storytelling that appears to be unique to that region. While stories are commonly told throughout the country, the forms considered here are presented in a manner quite atypical of ordinary speech. Linguists, anthropologists, and ethnomusicologists have collaborated to consider various aspects of these forms, each approach providing valuable insights into their performance. This article overviews the most recent work on this genre and appeals to linguists to engage in other such collaborative projects.

Keywords: sung tales, Papua New Guinea Highlands, music, stories

This article focuses on a particularly interesting performance genre that researchers have come to call “sung tales,” “chanted tales,” “sung narratives,” or “ballads.” But while the genre is fascinating itself, our understanding of it in the Papua New Guinea Highlands, imperfect as it may be at present, has really only been brought about by interdisciplinary research.

This interdisciplinary research has been undertaken by a number of researchers, and some of this work has resulted in a book called *Sung Tales from the Papua New Guinea Highlands: Studies in Form, Meaning, and Sociocultural Context*, edited by Alan Rumsey and me (Rumsey and Niles 2011; figure 1). It has just been published by ANU E Press and was launched online on 9 August 2011. Like all ANU E Press publications, it is available for free download. The site for our book is: http://epress.anu.edu.au/sung_tales_citation.html. Also online are a supplementary PDF file, twenty-two audio files, and a short video, thereby providing multimedia access to most of the performances discussed in the book. I feel that such accessible publications are certainly the future of most academic publishing.

Figure 1: Front cover of *Sung Tales from the Papua New Guinea Highlands*.



The printed book was launched on 28 September, 2011, at the conclusion of a conference celebrating sixty years of anthropology at the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra. It was launched by Professor Nicholas Evans, Department of Linguistics and Anthropology of the College of Asia and the Pacific at ANU. Ms. Jacinta Warakai-Manua, Deputy Papua New Guinea High Commissioner, also spoke at the launch. We plan to have another launch of the book at the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies in the near future. The Institute will also be selling copies of it. The following overview draws liberally on the contributions found in the book. Readers interested in learning more about this genre should definitely consult that source.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

While there is considerable variation regarding sung tales in different parts of the Highlands, the genre often has characteristics such as the following:

- sung tales are entertainment (and often educational, but not esoteric) told at night by a seated, individual performer, often indoors
- the tales are “sung” to a melody that is quite different from normal speech, with phrases marked by melody, vocables, etc.
- they are usually told by men, sometimes women
- the storytellers are poets, who create their tales in performance. This is a highly valued skill
- no dance or instruments accompany the telling of such stories
- there is frequent use of poetic expressions, archaic language, and various types of parallelism
- the stories are often well known to listeners and can often be told in normal speech as well
- there is seldom a special term marking the genre of “sung tales”; instead, the word for “story” is used (which includes tales told in a normal speaking voice as well)
- the performer is usually paid for the performance

Other aspects of sung tales are more variable:

- the composition of the audience may be all male, all female, or mixed
- the verbal responses of audience vary between silence, one syllable, or more extensive questions and/or comments
- vocables may be all but absent to quite extensive
- performances can last from several minutes to several hours

As this is a complex art form, interdisciplinary research has been absolutely essential to our research on it. The work has involved consideration of the:

- language (linguistics)
- story (folklore)

- music (ethnomusicology)
- context (anthropology)
- new uses (theology, political science)

My presentation of this subject at the meeting of the Linguistic Society of Papua New Guinea was addressed to an audience of linguists and others interested in language, appealing to them to involve researchers from such other disciplines in their own work where necessary. While my own focus has been music, my work on sung tales would have been quite inadequate without the assistance of researchers considering other aspects of these performances.

The study of sung tales has been undertaken by individuals sporadically since 1969; researchers such as ethnomusicologist Vida Chenoweth, historian Roderic Lacey, anthropologist Andrew Strathern, and linguistic anthropologist Alan Rumsey have written about the subject in passing or in considerable detail. However, this work was usually highly focused ethnographically or on one or another aspect of sung tales.

Consideration of the genre over a much wider area involved a larger number of researchers. This study really began in 2003 with an interdisciplinary research project funded by the Australian Research Council, led by Alan Rumsey. Alan coaxed me to be a partner investigator, but as I was involved in a number of other activities, I imagined my participation to be more one of support rather than particularly active. However, the combination of this fascinating genre coupled with Alan's enthusiasm, scholarship, and interest in collaboration drew me into the project in profound ways, further encouraging my own more general interest in sonic expression in the Hagen area (one of the regions where sung tales are performed), where I had first done research twenty years earlier.

Participants ranged from established researchers to beginning students, involving linguists, anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, historians, performers, and knowledgeable elders – all becoming involved in various aspects of the research project. In 2004, a workshop was held at the University of Goroka, and a second and final one in 2006 at Kefamo, also in Eastern Highlands, involving fourteen researchers from seven different universities and research institutions around the world. The resulting book, very much growing out of the research and workshops held previously, contains thirteen chapters, written by fourteen authors; the book is accompanied by audiovisual examples of many of the performances discussed in it.

This paper celebrates the accomplishment of that project and its culmination in the publication of the book, a result that was only possible through interdisciplinary collaboration that had very fruitful results. I

very much hope that this project will encourage other linguists to seek interdisciplinary collaboration opportunities, for the synergy of collaborative research is truly an advantage.

The genre of sung tales as so defined is confined to certain parts of the Highlands. Figure 2 shows the distribution of genres that we have considered sung tales, stretching from Bogaya, Duna, and Hewa in the west of Southern Highlands, including Huli and the Angal languages in that province, with most of the languages of Enga, and the western part of Western Highlands.

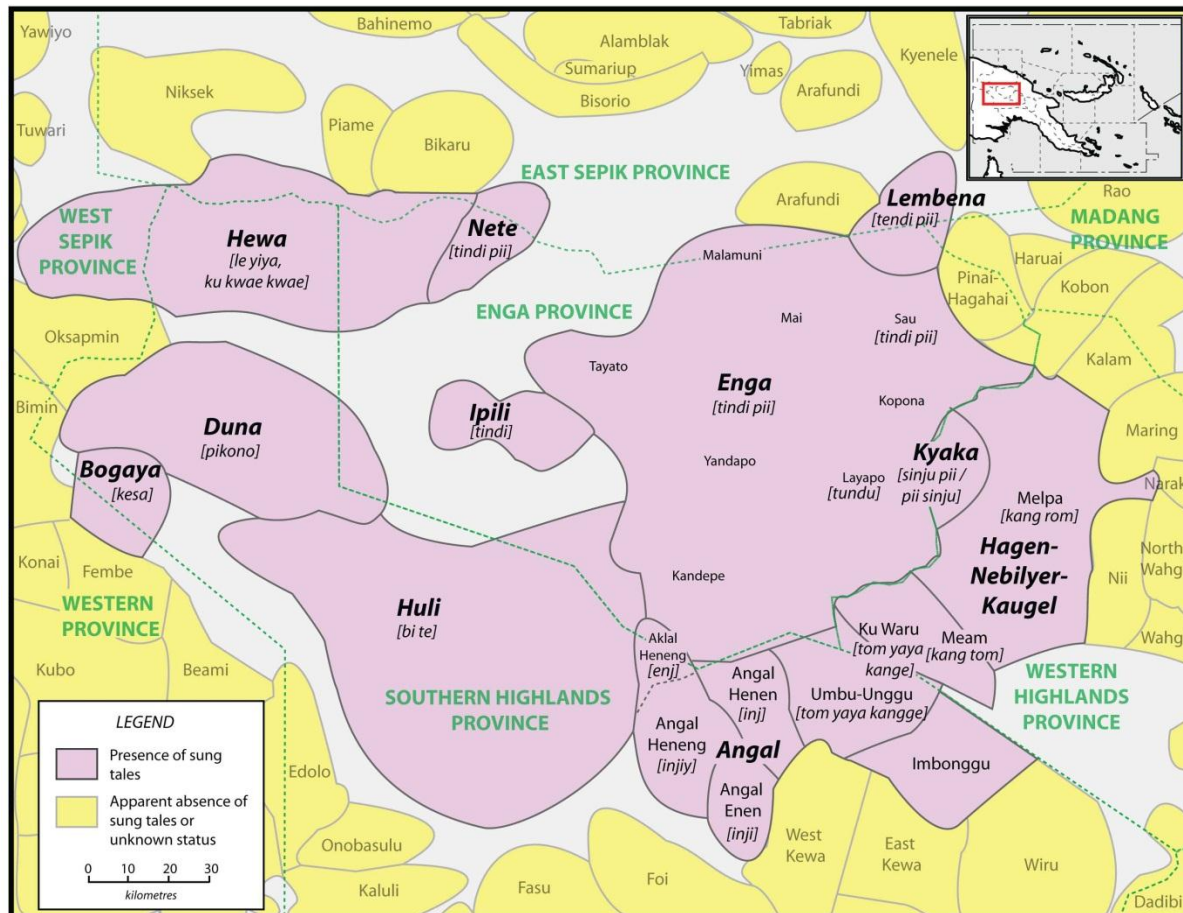


Figure 2: The distribution of sung tales in the Papua New Guinea Highlands. Purple shows presence, yellow their apparent absence. Language borders and names are based on maps of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (<http://www.pnglanguages.org>), with modifications by Alan Rumsey and Hans Reithofer (from Rumsey and Niles 2011:3, fig. 2).

Note also where there are absences: the southern parts of Southern Highlands, from Bosavi east to Wiru, the Wahgi languages further to the east, and north of Enga. While we are quite certain of some of these absences, in other regions lack of information remains a problem. We look forward to learning more about the distribution of sung tales in this area.

DUNA PIKONO

Moving from west to east, I will now very briefly overview some of these genres and their characteristics as discussed in *Sung Tales from the Papua New Guinea Highlands*. Duna *pikono* are considered in articles by Kenny Yuwi Kendoli, Kirsty Gillespie and Lila San Roque, and Michael Sollis. As identified by Gillespie and San Roque in *Sung Tales*, the melodic shape of *pikono* phrases is significant, consisting of a descent followed by a “ground” or mostly level area. This ground at the end of sung phrases is where the presentation of “praise names” or *kēiyaka* occurs. These are a special esoteric vocabulary of words. In the ground section of the melody, such terms are presented as part of a sequence, hence an example of textual parallelism.

During a performance of *pikono*, the audience may ask questions or comment on the story, thereby influencing the performer’s composition. Here, performances lasting three or more hours appear to be fairly common.

HULI BÌ TÉ

In the Huli area to the southeast of the Duna, sung tales are called *bì té*. In *Sung Tales from the Papua New Guinea Highlands*, they are discussed in articles by Gabe C. J. Lomas and Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan. *Bì té* are not infrequently performed by women. The storyteller often begins by instructing the listeners: “You say *è* [yes]” or even “You say *è*, or my parents will die.” This ensures a regular interjection of the word *è*, chanted on a level pitch by at least one of the listeners, telling the performer that the story is not being wasted on a sleeping audience in the dark. It also serves as a prompting device to help the performer continue with the development of the story.

Three different pitches predominate in the performance of *bì té*. These pitches and the resulting melodic movement have been identified by Pugh-Kitingan as being related to the pitches used for the Huli language. Here, speech tone largely determines the melodic shape of the performance. The three pitches are combined to reflect the low-rising, high-falling, and mid-level word tones.

In another *bì té* performance considered in *Sung Tales*, linguist Lomas feels that the tones of the language are often greatly affected by performance. Lomas’s focus, however, has been on the presentation of syntactical constructions of the language, and how they are affected or not in *bì té* performance. His long and deep association with the language has made him particularly aware of and sensitive to these changes.

IPILI TINDI

In *Sung Tales from the Papua New Guinea Highlands*, *ipili tindi* are discussed in articles by Terrance Borchard and Philip Gibbs, and Frances Ingemann. Parallelism abounds in *ipili tindi*, as is also apparent in sung tales from many other areas. In *ipili tindi*, parallelism can be brought about by word substitution;

the repetition of line-final vocables, words, or various types of medial and final verbs; and the use of speech or sense orienters. The melodic contour of phrases often follows an initial rise, followed by a slow descent to a fairly level area, and concluding on the level-pitch region or an ascent.

ENGA TINDI PII

In *Sung Tales from the Papua New Guinea Highlands*, Enga *tindi pii* are considered in a contribution by Philip Gibbs. Here, the performer is a sole man or woman, and while the primary purpose is entertainment, types of esoteric knowledge are also transmitted. Although they have become less common today, they continue to be performed in the western part of the province. The performance of *tindi pii* requires from the storyteller great creativity and facility with the poetic form. While the beauty of the language and the melodic setting appeals to listeners, the skilful storyteller also reflects on the human condition in an imaginary world, simultaneously based on the real world, but also contrasting with it.

KARINJ ENJ

Moving further to the west, in the Karinj part of the Angal Heneng or West Mendi language, Josep Haip performed an *enj* during our 2006 workshop held at Kefamo, just outside of Goroka. Performances of *enj* are discussed by Hans Reithofer in *Sung Tales from the Papua New Guinea Highlands*.

Enj are divided into non-metrical lines of varying length, but with a regular melodic shape. Lines are clearly identifiable on melodic grounds, but also by line-final vocables such as *e*, *la e*, *la*, *la o*, *la la o*, or formulas such as *inji* ('it's been told'). Lines are grouped into melodic units or cycles that have relatively fixed pitch contours, but may vary according to the performer. It seems that each melodic unit comprises a scene or episode of a story and typically ends in phrases that prompt the audience to respond with a melodic *ehe* ('oh yes!'). Here also the response is considered important to the continuation of the story.

Haip frequently commands different melodies to tell his story, something that Reithofer suggests enhances the interest and attention of listeners. In the excerpt included in the book, the initial, repeated melody is followed by a melodically unclear line, before Haip shifts to a new, higher range. The new melody exhibits a strict alternation of phrase endings: While all lines end on the formula *inji* ('it's been told'), Haip ends the two syllables of this word on one pitch in one phrase, and on a pitch a step higher in the other.

This strict alternation of different phrase ending pitches is very distinctive and might be seen as having some sort of structural similarity to Hagen performances discussed next, where a continually repeated melody is divided into two half-melodies, with many of the notes of one half-melody being separated by a step from the other half-melody.

MELPA KANG ROM

The co-editor and the primary motivator for the project on this genre, Alan Rumsey, has summarised a typical story of a sung tale in the Hagen area, known as *kang rom* in the Melpa language:

a young man sets out from his home to court a young woman he has heard about in a far-away place, encounters obstacles, overcomes them, wins her hand, returns home with her, sometimes living happily and prospering with her help, and sometimes not. (Alan Rumsey 2005)

The performance of Melpa *kang rom* is considered in articles by Andrew Strathern and Pamela Stewart, and myself in *Sung Tales from the Papua New Guinea Highlands*. One very important recording of this genre was made on Monday, 17 November 1980 at Radio Western Highlands. The performer was Paul Pepa, when he would have been about twenty-one years old.

This *kang rom* concerns the story of a man named Miti Krai and a woman Ambra Amb Rangmba. His recording was broadcast many times in the 1980s and has become a benchmark against which other performers are measured.

In contrast to what usually happens in the performance of *kang rom*, Pepa begins the recording with a courting song (*amb kenan*). While this is totally unprecedented, considering the story involved, it might be considered appropriate. In 2004, Pepa also demonstrated his performance of this *kang rom* dressed as if he were courting (figure 3).

The courting-song performance is typical of the genre and of most types of Hagen music in that a melody is used that is divisible into halves, with most of one half-melody being sung a step lower or higher than the other half-melody. The text of the song is combined with vocables (nonlexical syllables) to fill the melody that is repeated over and over. Hagen courting songs are sung unaccompanied, but are typically performed by a group for the *amb kenan* dance (Tok Pisin *tanim het*).

After three repetitions of the entire melody, Pepa immediately enters the sung tale (*kang rom*) performance itself. In contrast to the relatively slow pace of the courting song, the *kang rom* is performed very quickly. In spite of the great speed of the performance, Pepa repeats the same melody over and over to present his story. Here each line of 5 beats consists of text ending with a vocable or extended vowel. Eight lines combine to form a complete melody.

This canonic performance lasts about sixteen minutes, involving 780 lines of text, requiring over ninety-seven repetitions of the melody. In contrast to the other examples we have heard, here the audience is silent, focusing on the text. Indeed, I suggest that the repeating melody enables the audience and performer to concentrate on the text.

Even today, Pepa's 1980 performance is greatly admired for its poetry, precision, and clarity. While the story is well known, Melpa speakers still delight in hearing his version of it, told by a truly master storyteller.

At our first workshop on this genre (2004), Pepa was one of the performer/participants (figure 3). Although he was twenty-four years older, he could still demonstrate his superb command of this art. But he had not been idle over the quarter century. In recent years, he had been hired by politician Paias Wingti to perform *kang rom* in support of his candidacy in the national elections. Instead of a male suitor travelling throughout the area, Wingti was portrayed as seeking votes. Hence, Pepa's performance of



kang rom at an academic conference was perhaps just another contextual modification for his performances. As we had planned much more work with Pepa, we were all shocked to hear of his death in 2005.

Pepa's performance style influenced a number of other performers in the region and one of them has been studied over a number of years by Rumsey. In addition to considering his poetic storytelling, he has also looked at how tonal features of the language in the related Ku Waru area are reflected in performance using a repeating melody. While Rumsey and I feel that further work needs to be done on this question, microtonal variations in the melody do appear to reflect such tones.

Figure 3: Decorated as if for courting, Paul Pepa performing kang rom at the 2004 workshop (photo: Don Niles).

KU WARU TOM YAYA KANGE

The Ku Waru live to the southwest of the Melpa, speaking a dialect of what has been called the Bo-Ung language. While Pepa's performance style has been followed by some performers, it appears that the traditional performance of sung tales in this region is different in some aspects. In *Sung Tales from the Papua New Guinea Highlands*, Ku Waru *tom yaya kange* are discussed by Alan Rumsey and Don Niles.

The performance of a *tom yaya kange* by Peter Kerua also uses a repeating binary melody in a highly metric performance. Like Pepa's, Kerua's melody also consists of eight lines, but each line consists of eight beats. Instead of a vocable occurring on the final beat of a line, as in Pepa's performance, here it occurs on beats 7–8, but there is also an insertion of a midline vocable on beats 4–5.

To give some idea of what such a performance looks like in a more traditional setting, a short video of Kerua performing at Kailge in 1997 is included amongst the online examples (no. 18). Of particular interest are the reactions of the two men sitting on either side of him. In spite of the brevity of the video, the entertainment aspects of such performances are readily apparent. An excerpt from this video provides the photo used on the cover of our book (fig. 1).

PLEA

The nature of this genre, perhaps, demanded an interdisciplinary approach to its study. I think the results offer a fascinating insight into a performance genre that is little known outside of the Highlands. All the contributors very much hope that our publication will bring some attention to the richness of this tradition.

I do want to emphasise again, however, that such interdisciplinary collaborations should not be restricted to this genre. Genres such as courting songs, dance songs, call languages, instrumental communication systems, and oratory are fascinating subjects for linguists, but they are fascinating for researchers in other disciplines as well. Collaborative research will help us better understand such expressive riches in this country.

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LANGUAGE: captured '*live*' through the lens of dialectics

Olga Temple
University of Papua New Guinea
olga.temple77@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper advocates a holistic, dialectical approach to human language. The narrow focus of traditional analysis on fixed aspects of the multifaceted nature of Language cannot capture its creative energy – the “whole is more than the sum of its parts” (Aristotle: *Metaphysics*, Book I).

By viewing the complex phenomenon of human language in its essential *organic* unity, interconnectedness, change and evolution, dialectical reasoning elucidates the interrelationships between the dualities and contradictions of Language, thus revealing its Rational Mechanism.

I use a synthesis of Vygotsky's 'Analysis into Units' and David Hume's generalizations concerning human understanding as the 'lens of dialectics' that alone has the power to capture it 'live.' I argue that Language is Verbal Thought and that, therefore, the mechanism of abstract thought (generalization) is the driving force that naturally shapes all the diverse grammars of the world's languages. Generalization, I contend, is the Rational Mechanism of Language in all its manifestations; it is the key to a deeper understanding of Language, its creative energy, and the 'behavior' of its physical structures over Time.

The conception of language as a system of social signs, which is continuously created by the collective mind of the society, and which individual speakers use to spin their own 'webs of significance,' has far-reaching implications for such traditional areas of linguistic research as syntax, semantics and pragmatics, sociolinguistics, historical and comparative linguistics, and, in particular, for our understanding of creolization / grammaticalization processes.

After a brief discussion of 'meaning-as-use' and the ultimate 'indeterminacy' of meaning, I propose a new form of syntactic analysis (a *generalizing* analysis, or G-nalysis) which uses the universal principles of human thought to unravel the intricacies of inherently ambiguous linguistic structures.

Key words: word-meaning, dialectics, generalization, cognition, grammar, logic, resemblance, contiguity, cause/effect, synthesis and analysis.

If languages had a mechanism which were entirely rational, that mechanism could be studied in its own right (Saussure).

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

The dualities of human language have historically frustrated our attempts to understand its complex nature, for trying to describe the constantly changing forms of language is much like attempting to determine the shape of a cloud whipped by high winds. Ferdinand de Saussure's solution to this

intractable problem was to ‘freeze’ language in time, taking ‘tangible,’ ‘concrete’ snapshots of its physical structures, and disregarding all other aspects of its complexity: ‘Science which studies linguistic structure is not only able to dispense with other elements of language, but is possible only if those other elements are kept separate’ (Saussure: 1983).

In the last one hundred years, the zoom lens of descriptive analysis has revealed a lot of in-depth detail of the physical structures of language; yet, the living energy of its organic, changing whole has eluded all description. Fixed snapshots may only produce cartoon animations; they can never give us a video footage of the living organism: ‘The whole is more than the sum of its parts’ (Aristotle: *Metaphysics*, Book I). I will use the wide-angle lens of dialectics to capture Language ‘live,’ in its interconnectedness, movement, development and change.

THE LENS OF DIALECTICS

The dialectical view of language is based on a synthesis of Vygotsky’s ‘Analysis into Units’ (Vygotsky: 1934) and David Hume’s dissection of the nature of human understanding (Hume: 1748).

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), maybe by virtue of his professional expertise in psychology, argued that Saussure’s narrow focus on ‘concrete’ linguistic structures leads us down the garden path of subjective judgments, all of which inevitably distort the true nature of the living and complex WHOLE of Language. Using an organic compound (water) to illustrate his point, he argued that, in order to understand any complex organic structure (such as Language), we must study the properties of its smallest unit. Just as the properties of a molecule of water (H₂O) are different from the properties of its constituent parts (hydrogen and oxygen), so the properties of Language are different from the properties of its physical structures. ‘A word without meaning is an empty sound: meaning, therefore, is a criterion of word,’ wrote Vygotsky in his ground-breaking work, ‘Speech and Thought’ (Vygotsky: 1934). For this reason, ‘word-meaning’ is the smallest unit of Language, argued Vygotsky – it embodies all the inalienable properties of the ‘whole.’ These properties include

- **Physical:** sounds and structures; sound production and sound perception. Yet, a word without meaning is not a word of Language.
- **Psychological:** meaning – ‘every word is a generalization, an act of thought’; ideas come into existence through words:

*“But I forget what I to say so wanted
And fleshless thought dissolves in other shadows ...”*

Osip Mandelstam: *The Swallow* (1920)

- **Historical:** word-meanings live, grow, change, develop, evolve and die in human minds, and all minds exist in Time, the 4th dimension of all existence.
- **Social:** the double function of every Sign is (1) to communicate (2) meaning.

Vygotsky's assertion that 'every word is already a generalization and, therefore, an act of thought' fundamentally widens the scope of our inquiry, drawing in vital questions regarding the nature and function of thought: 'The conception of word-meaning as a unit of both generalising thought and social interchange is of incalculable value for the study of thought and language' (Vygotsky: 1934).

GENERALIZATION

As far back as 300 B.C., Aristotle defined wisdom as knowledge of the 'causes':

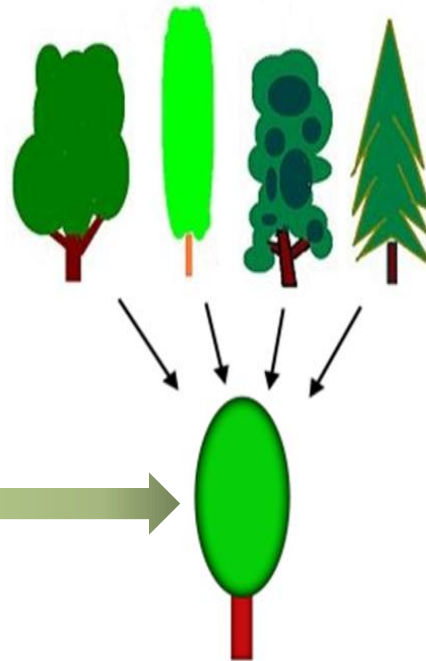
'We do not regard any of the senses as Wisdom; yet surely these give the most authoritative knowledge of particulars. But they do not tell us the 'why' of anything - e.g., why fire is hot; they only say that it is hot. ... Wisdom is knowledge about certain principles and causes' (Aristotle: *Metaphysics*, Book I).

Our experiences, connected in memory, engender knowledge, claimed Aristotle:

'... from memory, knowledge is produced in men; for several memories of the same thing produce finally the capacity for a single experience (Ibid.).

Words are those 'single experiences,' generalizations in the collective mind of the society, based on some similarity between multiple concrete experiences:

Aristotle's ideas reverberated hundreds of years later in the writings of al-Farabi, the great Mesopotamian philosopher of the tenth century AD: "The mind, in all its operations, exerts the function of synthesizing the many in the one" (al Farabi: A Letter in Reply to Certain Questions, in *Collection*, op. cit. n. 14, pp. 95-96). He pointed out that



We cannot understand the meaning of a scene presented to our senses unless we unite its parts into a perceived whole. Perception is an act of the mind which involves synthesizing. The act of imagination involves both analysis and synthesis in the sense that nothing can be imagined without synthesizing the many in the one. The act of judgment, whereby one thing is affirmed or denied of another, cannot be had except by synthesizing both terms, subject and predicate, in one act of comparison. Syllogism, too, is simply the synthesis of two judgments in a third one. Of all these operations of the mind, the concept, more than all others, represents the synthesizing function of the mind, for the concept is by definition the apprehension of the one in the many (Hammond R., 1947:10).

Several memories of the same thing (connected in the mind because of their similarity) produce, finally, a single generic idea (sign) for all of them – a concept, a generalization. Societies, thus, shrink their ‘worlds’ into categories of ideas (word-meanings, generalizations): ‘The world of experience must be greatly simplified and generalised before it can be translated into symbols. Only in this way does communication become possible, for the individual’s experience resides only in his own consciousness and is, strictly speaking, not communicable. To become communicable, it must be included in a certain category which, by tacit convention, human society regards as a unit’ (Vygotsky: 1934).

It is abstract thought (generalization) that is the foundation of human consciousness, of the realization of our ‘separateness’ from the rest of existence. Verbal thought (thought in words) sets human language apart from animal communication systems: ‘The qualitative distinction between sensation and thought is the presence in the latter of a generalised reflection of reality, which is also the essence of word meaning: and consequently that meaning is an **act of thought** in the full sense of the term’ (Vygotsky: 1934). The nature of thought (and thinking) becomes, therefore, an integral and necessary part of linguistic investigation.

But how exactly do we abstract this ‘single experience’ (meaning) that encapsulates multiple concrete experiences connected in memory? Given the role of thought in human life, it is amazing that the nature of the process of generalization had not attracted much attention before the middle of the eighteenth century.

WHAT IS THINKING?

David Hume (1711–1776) was, by his own admission, perhaps the first philosopher to enquire into the mechanism of human understanding. His ideas about the workings of the human mind appear first in his *Treatise of Human Nature* (1740), followed by *Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding* (1748), many later editions of which were published under the title of ‘*An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*.’ Having observed a remarkable similarity in the way that people connect ideas when communicating (in all times and places, and in all languages), he sought to determine the nature of these connections, and concluded that they follow a universal pattern:

Among different languages ... it is found, that the words, expressive of ideas, the most compounded, do yet nearly correspond to each other: a certain proof that the simple ideas, comprehended in the compound ones, were bound together by some universal principle, which had an equal influence on all mankind.

Though it be too obvious to escape observation, that different ideas are connected together; I do not find that any philosopher has attempted to enumerate or class all the principles of association; a subject, however, that seems worthy of curiosity. To me, there appear to be only three principles

of connexion among ideas, namely, Resemblance, Contiguity in time or place, and Cause or Effect.

That these principles serve to connect ideas will not, I believe, be much doubted. A picture naturally leads our thoughts to the original [1]; the mention of one apartment in a building naturally introduces an enquiry or discourse concerning the others [2]; and if we think of a wound, we can scarcely forbear reflecting on the pain which follows it [3] ... The more instances we examine, and the more care we employ, the more assurance shall we acquire, that the enumeration, which we form from the whole, is complete and entire:

[1] Resemblance; [2] Contiguity; [3] Cause and effect (Hume: 1748).

The Treatise of Human Nature, published earlier, explains how this simple universal mechanism of connecting ideas generates the infinity of human thoughts and opinions:

As all simple ideas may be separated by the imagination, and may be united again in what form it pleases, nothing would be more unaccountable than the operations of that faculty, were it not guided by some universal principles, which render it, in some measure, uniform with itself in all times and places. Were ideas entirely loose and unconnected, chance alone would join them; and it is impossible the same simple ideas should fall regularly into complex ones ... without ... some associating quality, by which one idea naturally introduces another. This uniting principle among ideas is not to be considered as an inseparable connexion; for that has been already excluded from the imagination: Nor yet are we to conclude, that without it the mind cannot join two ideas; for nothing is more free than that faculty: but we are only to regard it as a gentle force, which... is the cause why... languages so nearly correspond to each other; nature in a manner pointing out to every one those simple ideas, which are most proper to be united in a complex one. The qualities, from which this association arises, and by which the mind is after this manner conveyed from one idea to another, are three, viz. Resemblance, Contiguity in time or place, and Cause/ Effect (Hume: 1740).

Understanding (which Aristotle called “knowledge of the *universals*”) implies seeing how things relate to each other in terms of resemblance, contiguity in space and time, and cause/ effect; for example, anyone can dismantle an engine or a computer, but few can put it together again (to do that, we must know how the parts relate to each other, how they should be connected to form a complex system).

Thinking, therefore, is the process of abstracting compound meaning through connecting ideas by Resemblance (a friend’s picture reminds us of that friend), Contiguity in time / space (a friend’s personal belongings remind us of that friend), and Cause/Effect (when we see heavy clouds, we expect it to rain).

Vygotsky, thoroughly versed in dialectical materialism, viewed the process of thought (and everything else in existence) as the ‘struggle of opposites’; from this vantage point, he saw the mechanism of understanding to be both synthesis and analysis of ideas:

In order to form a concept, we must be able not only to connect, but also to abstract, to single out characteristic elements, and to view them separately from the ‘totality of the concrete experience in which they are embedded. ... In genuine concept formation, it is equally important to unite and to separate: Synthesis and Analysis presuppose each other, as inhalation presupposes exhalation (Vygotsky: 1934).

Despite the structural differences between thought and speech, which Vygotsky discussed in thorough detail, he argued that the universal principles of thought (synthesis and analysis) are also the universal principles of all human speech:

Every thought creates a connection, fulfills a function, solves a problem. The flow of thought is not accompanied by a simultaneous unfolding of speech. The two processes are not identical, and there is no rigid correspondence between the units of thought and speech. ... Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them. Every thought tends to connect something with something else, to establish a relationship between things (Vygotsky: 1934).

Conceptualization (cognition generally) is a complex process of both connecting and contrasting ideas. Synthesis and Analysis of ideas not only form the substance of each of our thoughts; they also shape our general perspective (understanding) of things. ‘We look with our eyes, but we see with our mind.’ What we see depends on the lens we use (wide-angle or telephoto); synthesis (WA) and analysis (zoom-in) are the two lenses of each ‘Mind’s Eye’; our focus (WA/ close-up) determine how we actually see things, depending on which of them predominates in our thinking. To illustrate my point, here are two snapshots of the same planet – Earth:



The Earth seen from Apollo 17
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holism>

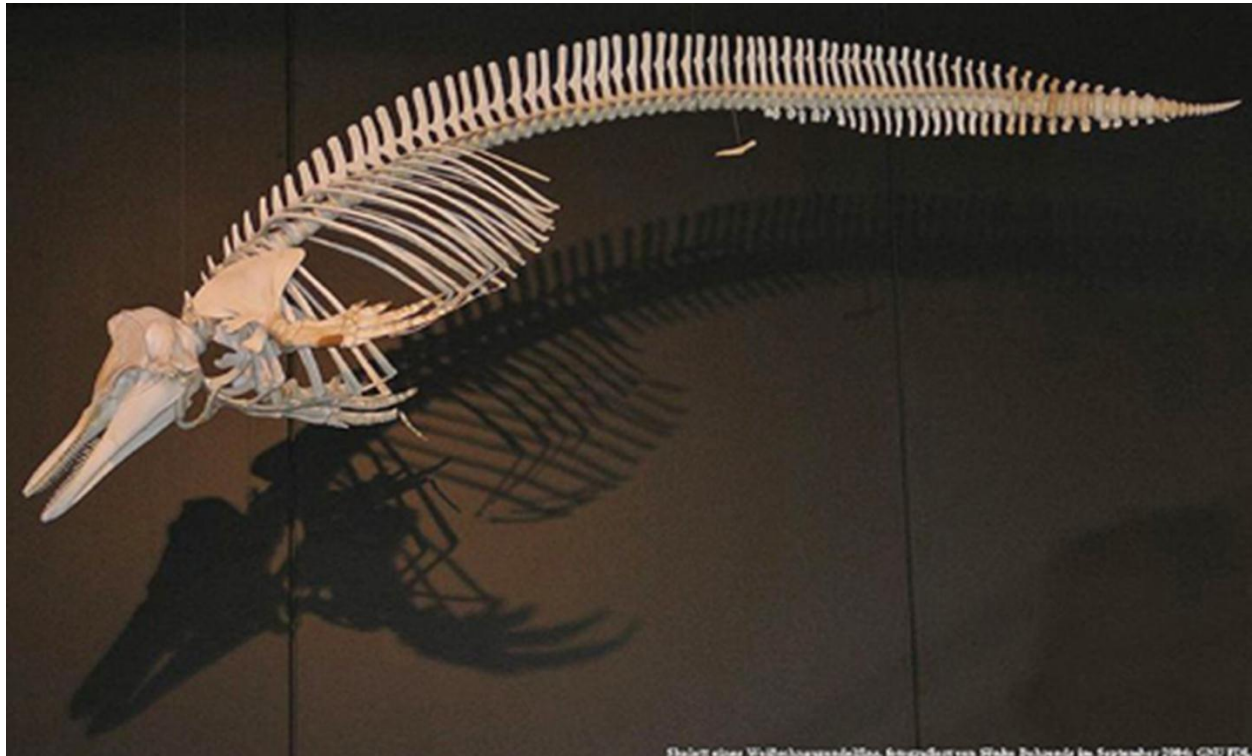


Parched earth resulting from a drought
<http://dampwater.tripod.com/id4.html>

Dialectics is the philosophy of change; through the WA lens of synthesis, it views things as a whole, in their essential interconnectedness, development, motion and change, thus capturing complex systems ‘live’ – in motion (i.e., the dolphins in the snapshot below):



Metaphysics (analysis), on the other hand, focuses on parts of the whole, and examines them in isolation from it (below is an ‘in-depth’ detail, *part* of one of those frolicking dolphins):



White-beaked dolphin skeleton. Source: Zoologischen Museum Hamburg/Soebecoearth.org

DIALECTICAL VIEW OF LANGUAGE

The WA lens of dialectics captures language in motion, in its conception by human minds; it captures the union of its interrelated psycho-physical and socio-historical dualities, all represented in *word-meaning*, its smallest unit. Viewing every word as already a generalization, an ‘ACT of THOUGHT,’ is a game-changer. It breathes life into linguistic structures, and revolutionizes the study of both syntax and meaning.

RELATIVITY OF MEANING – THE 3RD DIMENSION OF VERBAL THOUGHT

Viewing every word as an act of thought begs the question: “Who is the ACTOR?” In their struggle for survival, human societies developed their own ‘currencies of thought exchange’ (systems of denotative word-meanings).

Societies, however, live (and think!) in time; that is why “in the historical evolution of language, the very structure of meaning and its psychological nature also change. From primitive generalisations, verbal thought rises to the most abstract concepts. It is not merely the content of a word that changes, but the way in which reality is generalised and reflected in a word” (Vygotsky: 1934). The *act* of thought implies active generalizing by unique living and thinking minds (individual and collective). That is why word-meanings are ‘fluid’ – conceived by living minds, they germinate, live, grow, change, develop and die in them; even denotative meanings, crystallized in collective social consciousness, also change, along with it, over time – to paraphrase Protagoras, ‘MIND Is the Measure.’

‘FLUID’ MEANINGS

The mechanism of generalization³ in the collective mind of the society drives all processes of semantic shift, lexical innovation, reanalysis and grammaticalization. Metaphoric and metonymic extension (which are nothing but associations by Resemblance and Contiguity) in living social minds cause the ‘fluidity’ of denotative word-meanings. Here are a few examples from the Online Etymology Dictionary

(<http://www.etymonline.com>):

Semantic Shift: Amelioration

NICE - late 13c., "foolish, stupid, senseless," from O.Fr. nice "silly, foolish," from L. nescius "ignorant," lit. "not-knowing," from ne- "not" (see un-) + stem of scire "to know." "The sense development has been extraordinary, even for an adj." [Weekley] -- from "timid" (pre-1300); to "fussy, fastidious" (late 14c.); to "dainty, delicate" (c.1400); to "precise, careful" (1500s, preserved in such terms as a nice distinction and nice and early); to "agreeable, delightful" (1769); to "kind, thoughtful" (1830). In 16c.-17c. it is often difficult to determine exactly what is meant when a writer uses this word.

³ Association of ideas by resemblance (metaphor), contiguity in space and time (metonymy), and cause/effect

Semantic Shift: Pejoration

SILLY - O.E. *gesælig* "happy" (related to *sæl* "happiness"), from W.Gmc. **sæligas* (cf. O.N. *sæll* "happy," Goth. *sels* "good, kindhearted," O.S. *salig*, M.Du. *salich*, O.H.G. *salig*, Ger. *selig* "blessed, happy, blissful"), from PIE base **sel-* "happy" (cf. L. *solari* "to comfort"). The word's considerable sense development moved from "blessed" to "pious," to "innocent" (c.1200), to "harmless," to "pitiable" (late 13c.), to "weak" (c.1300), to "feeble in mind, lacking in reason, foolish" (1570s). Further tendency toward "stunned, dazed as by a blow" (1886) in knocked silly, etc.

Semantic Shift: Widening (by analogy/ metaphoric extension)

MOUSE – rodent vs. computer appliance; *drunk mouse* - When the pointer on your computer screen moves around wildly or irregularly, you are said to have a drunk mouse. This commonly happens when there is dirt inside the track ball area of your mouse.

deja moo – ‘the feeling that you've heard this particular bullsh*t before’

What are those bells ringing here? Why? These analogy examples are from Netlingo:
<http://www.netlingo.com/dictionary/d.php>

The current wave of linguistic change, triggered off by new technologies (the Internet, SMS, social networking sites such as FB, YouTube, etc.) is characterized by the mushrooming of acronyms in all languages. What causes the human minds to create acronyms (and even ‘backronyms’; Re: www.netlingo.com)? Associations by *Resemblance* to the first letters of the words, because (*Cause/Effect*) they habitually occur together (*Contiguity*)!

Put otherwise: when a group of words routinely occur together, the human mind associates them by their contiguity. The first letters of the constituent words will call to mind that particular phrase, simply because (*Cause/Effect*) of their Resemblance to the first sounds of the words in the sequence (*Contiguity*); i.e., OMG – Oh My God, LOL – Laughing Out Loud, DUI – Driving Under Influence, IYD – In Your Dreams; EOM – End Of Message; SWU – So What’s Up?, etc.

Here are a few other examples of the fluid nature of word-meanings from the Online Etymology Dictionary to illustrate semantic shift over time:

REANALYSIS (from more concrete to more abstract concepts)

ABLE - early 14c., from O.Fr. (*h*)*able* (14c.), from L. *habilem*, *habilis* "easily handled, apt," verbal adj. from *habere* "to hold" (see *habit*). "Easy to be held," hence "fit for a purpose." The silent *h*- was dropped in English and resisted academic attempts to restore it 16c.-17c., but some derivatives acquired it (e.g. *habilitment*, *habilitate*), via French.

AMBI- combining form meaning "both, on both sides," from L. *ambi-* "around, round about," from PIE **ambhi* "around" (cf. Gk. *amphi* "round about," Skt. *abhitah* "on both sides," Avestan *aibi*, O.E. *ymbe*, Ger. *um*, Gaul. *ambi-*, O.Ir. *imb-* "round about, about," O.C.S. *oba*, Lith. *abu* "both"). The PIE root probably is an ablative plural of **ant-bhi* "from both sides," from **ant-* "front, forehead" (see *ante*).

WHY - O.E. *hwi*, instrumental case (showing for what purpose or by what means) of *hwæt* (see *what*), from P.Gmc. **khwi* (cf. O.S. *hwi*, O.N. *hvi*), from PIE **qwei*, locative of **qwo-* "who" (cf. Gk. *pei* "where").

REANALYSIS (Grammaticalization)

In all languages, the more abstract 'grammatical' word-meanings evolved from more concrete lexical words; i.e., the so-called 'function words' – auxiliary and modal verbs, prepositions, etc.

In language contact situations, these same universal principles of human thought (generalization) have, in exactly the same way, created the grammars of new languages – creoles; for example, such grammatical items in Tok Pisin as the suffixes *-im* (< 'him', to indicate transitivity) or the adjective-forming *-pla* (< 'fellow'), etc.

Below is a collection of some Krio proverbs from Sierra Leone (West Africa), which my UPNG students translated into Tok Pisin in the past four years (2008-2011). Tok Pisin translations exhibit consistency of grammatical forms for expressing highly abstract grammatical meanings of mood, modality, tense, aspect, transitivity, subordination, causality, possession, etc. – the collective mind of the Tok Pisin speech community has 'generalized' ways of expressing complex abstract meanings, just like all other social minds have done. In the absence of common 'currency' of thought exchange, generalizing human minds create new ways to generalize, because that is how they think! Generalization Is the Rational Language Mechanism: the Logic of generalizing human minds underlies the structures of all human languages, and the examples below clearly show the ability of all three languages to express complex grammatical meanings.

KRIO PROVERBS TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH & TOK PISIN

BAD BUSH NŌ DE FŌ TROWE BAD PIKIN

[English: There is no bad bush to throw away a bad child]

Em i nogat bus long tromoi nogut pikinini
 Inogat nogut hap long tromai nogut pikinini
 Inogat bus long tromow hambak pikinini
 Inogat bus nogut long tromoi pikinini nogut
 Inogat bus nogut lo tromoi nogut pikinini
 Inogat bagarap bus lo tromoim wanpela hambak pikinini

Inogat nogut bush long tromai nogut pikinini
 Inogat bus nogut bilong tromai nogut pikinini igo
 E nogat bus weh e nogut, bilong tromoi wanpla nogut pikinini
 I nogat wanpela nogut bus lo tromoi wanpela bikhet pikinini
 Inogat nogut bush blong tromoi ol nogut pikinini long en
 Nogat wanpela bus nogut stap lo rausim ol nogut pikinini (2011, Madang)
 Inogat bus nogut blong tromoim wanpela pikinini nogut
 I nogat bus nogut lo tromoim nogut pikinini

AS YU MEK YU BED, NA SO YU GO LEDŃN PAN AM.

[English: As you make your bed, so you shall lie on it]

Olsem yu mekim bed blo yu, yu mas slip antap
 Olsem tasol yu wokim bet blo yu, yu inap silip lone m
 Taim yu mekim bed bilong yu, yu ken silip antap long em
 Yu mekim bed bilong yu, olsem nay u slip
 Olsem yu mekim bet bilong yu, nay u ken silip
 Taim yu wokim bet bilong yu, yu inap silip
 Olsem yu mekim bed, yu bai silip long em
 Taim yu wokim bed bilong yu, em yu inap silip antap long em
 Taim yu stretim bet, bai yu silip long en
 Yu yet yu mekim bet blong yu, bai yu yet silip antap long en
 Taim yu wokim bet blo yu, orait yu bai silip antap long en
 Olsem yu mekim bet blo yu, em nau yu can slip long em
 Taim yu wokim bet bilong yu, clostu bai yu slip antap long em
 Yu wokim bed blong yu yet, nay u ken malolo long em (2011, Madang)
 Olsem yu yet mekim bed, orait yu yet silip long em
 Taim yu wokim bed bilong yu, dispela ken silip lo en.

YU KŔBA SMOK SOTE, I MŔS KŔMŔT

[English: No matter how you try to cover up smoke, it must come out]

Yu bai traim lo karamapim simuk, tasol em bai kam aut yet
 Maski yu traim lo haitim paia, em bai kam aut yet
 Maski yu traim long haitim simuk, em bai kamap peles kilia
 Yu ken traim long haitim smuk tasol em bai kam aut yet
 Wanem kain rot yu traim long haitim simuk, em bai kam aut yet
 Maski yu traim long karamapim sumuk, em bai kam arasait yet
 Hatt tru yu pasim sumuk, em bai kam outsait
 Maski wanem samtin yu wokim long passim simuk, em I bai kam out yet
 Yu ken taraim long karamapim simuk, tasol em bai e mas kam aut yet
 Maski yu traim long karamapim wanpela simuk, em bai stil kam arasait
 Maski yu laik haitim simuk, em bai kamaut yet

PUSH-PUSH DE STŔP PAN WŔL [English: Pushing ends at the wall]

Pusim bai inap long wol
 Pusim bai stop long wol

Pusim inap nau/ Pusim stop long wol/ hap
 Pusim arere bilong wol
 Pusim igo pinis long wol
 Pusim wall igo lo as blo en
 Pusim pinis long kona
 Pusim I save pinis long wall
 Yu ken pusim tasol bai yu stop yet long wol
 Yu pusim, pusim, em go long wol em stop nau
 Push igo nap lo wall
 Wall save stopim samting yu pusim

IVIN WŌM SĔF KIN VĔKS

Even a worm can get angry (Enough is enough)

Tru olsem binatang inap koros (inap em inap)
 Na tu, ol binatang ken koros
 Binatang tu ken belhat
 Ol binatang tu save belhat
 Wom tu ken belhat
 Liklik sinek inap belhat tu
 Iven wom inap belat (inap em inap)
 Wom tu i save belhat
 Ol ot tu save belhat
 Ol wom tu can belhat (olsem na enap em enap)
 Em inap, ol man tu save coros
 Ol wom to i save kros
 Ol liklik snek tu ken kisim belhat
 Na tu binatang blong kraun iken kros
 Wom tu bai belhat

"IF A BIN NO," NA-IN DE LAS (NA-IN ōLWES DE BIĒN)

"If I had only known!" is always last (it always is behind)

Sapos mi bin save pas – em olgeta taim i save las oltaim
 ‘Sapos mi bin save!’ – em algeta taim em last (em algeta taim em behain)
 Sapos mi save! Em nogat
 Sapos mi bin save: em save altaim stap long baksait
 Sapos mi bin save, em olgeta taim i las
 Sapos mi bin save – em bai stap bihain olgeta taim
 Sapos mi bin tingim, em olgeta em biain
 ‘Sapos mi bin save!’ – em olgeta taim i save kam last
 Sapos mi bin save – em bai stap bihain
 Sapos mi bin save, em save kamap las olgeta taim
 Sapos mi bin save, em olgeta taim isa behain
 Sapos mi bin save, oltaim em i save kam las
 Sapos mi bin save pastaem, nau em last nau
 Sapos mi bin save – em las olgeta taim
 Sapos mi gat save – olgeta taim em sa kamap behain (2011, Madang)
 Sapos mi bin save longtaim, i behain oltaim.

Sopos mi bin sawe – em sawe stap las olgeta taim (2011, Madang)
 Sapos mi bin save, em bai olgeta taim bian

PEKIN WE NO YERI IN MAMA IN WOD, NA TRIT DO MEN AM.

English: A child who does not obey his Mother's word will grow up in the street.

Pikinini husait ino harim toktok blong mama blong em, pasin blong stap nating long rot bai
 painin em
 Supos pikinini I no harem tok bilong mama, em bai lainim pasim long rot
 Pikinini husait ino harim tok blong mama blong em, bai walkabout raun nabaut, nabaut
 Pikinini husait ino sawe harim tok bilong mama bai painin taim nogut long strit (2011, Madang)
 Pikinini husait no save arem toktok bilong mama save kamap sirit pikinini (2011)

Metaphor (analogy, association by resemblance/similarity), **metonymy** (association by contiguity in space/time), and **causality** (association by cause/ effect) are the 'sinews' of Generalization, the universal mechanism of human thought. Collective minds of speech communities create grammars (i.e., the socially assigned denotative word-meanings and rules of their combination) by categorizing their experiences of the world and by conventionalizing the use of reanalyzed content words infused with more abstract grammatical meaning. We see here how 'from primitive generalisations,' verbal thought has risen to more abstract grammatical concepts in Tok Pisin: 'olsem' & 'sapos' clearly derive from English 'all the same' and 'suppose.' The living, thinking social mind has reanalyzed the more concrete meaning because of similarity (resemblance) between them – it is not merely the content of a word that has changed, but the way in which reality has been generalized and reflected in the word.

In a refreshing break from the narrow analytical approach of purely descriptive tradition, Morten H. Christiansen of the Department of Psychology, Cornell University, and Nick Chater of the Department of Psychology, University College London, advanced a similar view, arguing that 'Language reflects preexisting, and hence non-language-specific, human learning and processing mechanisms' which 'provide a possible origin of grammatical structure from a proto-language initially involving perhaps unordered and uninflected strings of content words' (Christiansen & Chater: 2008). They concluded that 'Language, in all its diversity, has been shaped by the brain' and that most of language change and creolization arise from 'cognitive constraints on learning and processing' (Ibid.).

Dialectical linguistics views Language (verbal thought) as a natural product and reflection of the collective social mind; language evolves in society in the course of communication necessary for survival. This social function of language opens up yet another dimension of its fluid nature:

MEANING AS USE: THE WHOLE IS MORE THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

“The universals are not things existing in themselves, but they exist only in individuals, and their existence is accidental in the sense that they are subject to the existence of individuals”

Al Farabi: *A Letter in Reply to Certain Questions*, in Collection, op. cit. n. 10, p. 94.

Language is more than the sum of its word-meanings and rules. It is a social TOOL, the spinning wheel

we use for spinning our infinite ‘webs of significance.’ How does it work?

Artists can create any kind of mosaic images by arranging colored tiles in different ways.

The mosaics on the House of Parliament in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, illustrate my point.

Like artists, we create complex meanings by arranging words into sentence mosaics.

Bhartrhari, the Indian scholar of the 7th century AD, believed the sentence should be interpreted as a single unit which “conveys its meaning ‘in a flash,’ just as a picture is first perceived as a unity, notwithstanding subsequent analysis into its component coloured shapes”

(Robins: 1997). Each sentence is not understood as a sequence of words put together: the full

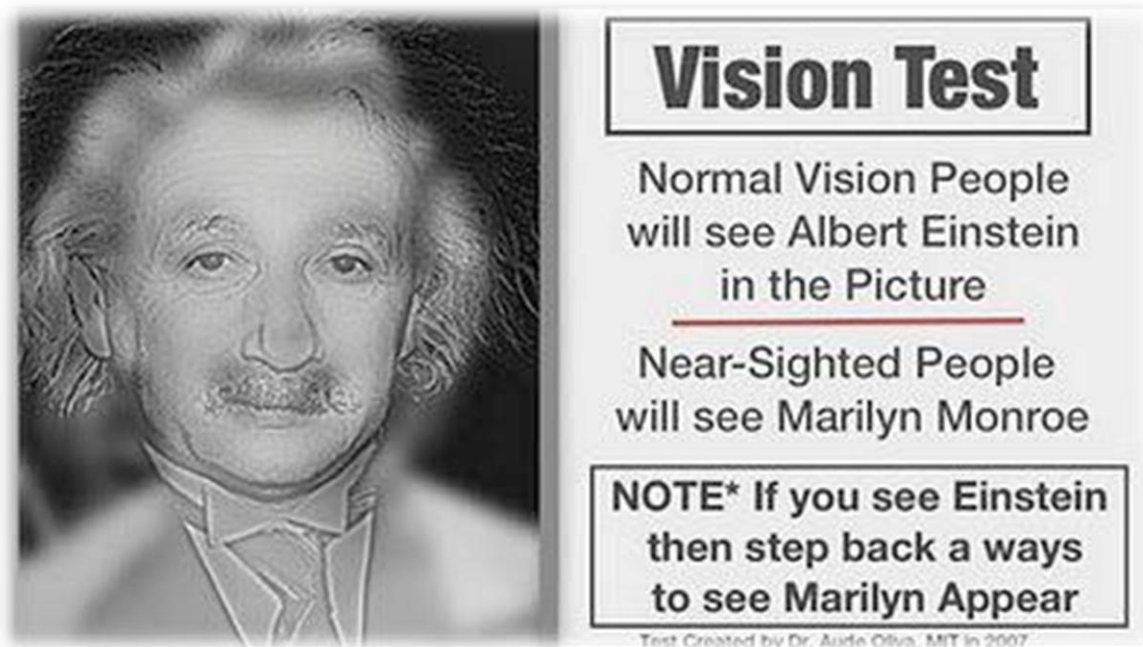
meaning of each word is only understood in the context of its relationship with other words around it.

Words are like tiles of different colors – what is the meaning of each of them? The meaning of each tile is its *use* in the mosaic: i.e., a dark brown tile could be a feather on one of those cassowaries, part of a man’s hair, a crocodile’s toe, a pig’s tail, or anything else the artist makes it. **How** the words are joined in the



nexus of the sentence creates the *meaning* of the mosaic. In the same way, words acquire their true meaning only in the nexus of the proposition, in the context of the composite whole of the sentence mosaic. Compare, for example, the meaning of ‘beef’ in ‘You always beef about this woman’; ‘Where is the beef?’; ‘You have a beef with me?’; ‘Your essay is good, but you must beef it up with facts,’ etc. ‘Meaning as Use’ is so fluid that that words and their meanings are often relatively independent of each other in the word ‘mosaics’ we make in live communication (the same brown tile can be used as part of a crock’s tail, cassowary eye, or the root of a tree in the mosaic above). The same utterances may convey different meanings, shaped by the circumstances of exchange, the relationship between the speakers, the tone of voice, overall idiosyncrasy of perception, etc.

Thus, yet another dimension of the fluid nature of word-meanings opens up when we consider the subjectivity of each Mind’s Eyesight. Despite all efforts to ‘fix’ and describe meaning in use, it is practically impossible do so by analyzing the ‘implicatures’ of already produced utterances – these exist in individual minds, living and thinking in Time, and the analyst is always just another mind’s vision. The ‘test’ below illustrates my point:



We all perceive the world’s mosaics with our own eyes and ears, and we ‘make sense’ of them only in our own heads. Each mind’s clarity of vision depends on so many factors – the sum total of one’s experiences, level of cognitive development, emotional/physical state, etc., as well as on the socio-cultural context and place/time of communication. The ‘mosaic image’ of a complex generalization (sentence meaning) is subjective to each mind’s eyesight (Einstein or Marilyn?); it depends as much on

the ‘color’ and patterns of the word-meanings making up the whole ‘image’ (proposition), as on the all the other variables (individual experiences and memories of the people who are trying to make sense of them, social and physical circumstances of exchange, etc.). This is why ambiguity is so inherent in all human languages. Meaning has no physical existence independent of the mind that conceives it. Despite the common ‘currency of thought exchange’ operating in every speech community (grammar), the subjectivity of each mind’s perception often results in ambiguity and difference of opinion – ‘Mind Is the Measure’:

‘There is nothing that is either good or bad, but thinking makes it so’

Shakespeare: Hamlet

We thus spin our infinite ‘webs of significance,’ but their TRUTH is measured only by physical reality.

GENERALIZATION – THE RATIONAL LANGUAGE MECHANISM

Thinking, we have established, is connecting ideas by resemblance, contiguity in space/time, and cause/effect into composite patterns/ mosaics of meaning. Thinking is a process, driven by the opposition between synthesis and analysis of ideas. In order to form a concept (i.e., *understand* something), we must be able not only to connect, but also to *abstract*, to *single out* its characteristic elements, and to view them separately from the “totality of the concrete experience in which they are embedded” (Vygotsky: 1934). I contend that, since generalization is the mechanism of human thought, it is also the mechanism of Language (which *is* verbal thought).

To measure the truth of this proposition, let us see whether the physical structures of the world’s languages bear out this hypothesis. Indeed, most basic grammatical concepts represent associations by resemblance, contiguity or cause/effect involved in the process of generalization; for example,

1. **Parts of Speech** (the functions of words in the sentence): nouns ‘name’ things on the basis of all three associations; finite verbs, in addition, carry the meaning of Time and connect to their subjects (associations by contiguity); adjectives describe nouns (association by resemblance); adverbs may describe adjectives /verbs (by resemblance) or describe either when /where an action takes place (association by contiguity), or why, for what purpose, with what consequence, on what condition an action is performed (causality, association by cause/effect), etc.
2. **Thematic Roles** (declensions of the noun) show relationships between nouns and verbs/ other nouns: Genitive case, for example, may indicate possession or source of the action (association by contiguity in space), Dative – direction of the action towards the noun (contiguity in space), mixed up with purpose (causal association); Instrumental case shows by what means the action

was performed (a mix of resemblance, contiguity and causality); Locative case expresses contiguity in time/ space associations, etc.

3. **Verb Conjugations, Tense, Voice & Aspect:** a mix of resemblance and contiguity associations
4. **Modality:** resemblance associations, etc.

All of the above show relationships between word-meanings in the sentence mosaic, created by human minds attempting to reflect perceived relationships between things in the physical world.

To make a mosaic, we must not only put our tiles together into a meaningful pattern, we must also add enough detail (pixels) to make the image clearer. Similarly, to make a sentence, we must not only put words together into the basic nexus of the sentence, but, to make our meaning clearer, we must also describe the major sentence constituents. Synthesis and analysis of word-meanings produce thought/ speech; we spin our verbal ‘webs of significance’ by

1. Putting word-meanings together into the *nexus* of the proposition (**synthesis**) and
2. Describing *parts* of the nexus by associating them with other ideas, based on some Resemblance, Contiguity, or Cause/ Effect relationship (**analysis**).

Generalization, thus, forms the matrix of universal grammar of verbal thought which finds expression in countless forms and structures of the world’s languages, all shaped by it:

[Logic] shares something with grammar in that it provides rules for expressions, yet it differs in that grammar only provides rules specific to the expressions of a given community, whereas the science of logic provides common rules that are general for the expressions of every community (al Farabi: 1931; 17.5-7, 18.4-7).

We will now use the key of human logic to unlock the superficial complexities of syntax. Once we are able to see the logic that holds the word mosaics together, syntactic analysis becomes an enjoyable pastime.

THE ‘UNIVERSAL INVARIABLES’ OF LANGUAGE

Every thought tends to connect something with something else, to establish a relationship between things. Every thought moves, grows and develops, fulfills a function, solves a problem.

Lev Vygotsky: 1934

The sentences of all languages, irrespective of their morphological type or word order, always *connect* ‘what we speak about’ (the Subject) with ‘what we say about it’ (the Predicate), even if the subject is only implied, as in imperatives; for example: [You] “Come in, please” etc.

The ‘universal invariables’ of Synthesis (Nexus) and Analysis (Modification) govern all thought and speech:

1. **Synthesis (Nexus)**, or the Subject-Predicate connection, is what makes a sentence out of a string of word-meanings. Word order is irrelevant; it varies: i.e., SVO, SOV, VSO, VOS, or the more rare predominantly OVS /OSV patterns, which make up only 0.75% and 0.25% of the world’s languages, respectively (Christiansen & Chater: 2008)
and
2. **Analysis (Modification)** of the three basic constituents allows for *recursion*, or *embedding* of modifiers into any of the three slots of the basic sentence pattern. The connections between word-meanings /groups of word-meanings (whether based on Resemblance, Contiguity, Cause/Effect, or a combination of all three) are the result of our reasoning, a particular *generalization* that we make. For example, ‘*Cogito, ergo sum.*’

The *functions* of words in the sentence – whether they *name* the main sentence constituents or *modify* them – determine the relationships between them. These functions (Parts of Speech) are the same in all languages. Resultant word-meanings form progressively bigger chunks of meaning (phrases, clauses, whole sentences, utterances, discourse, etc.). The Noun, Adjective, and Adverb functions can be performed by the smallest *units* of language (word-meanings), *phrases* (groups of word-meanings that act together as a Noun, Adjective, or Adverb), or dependent *clauses* (Nouns, Adjectives, or Adverbs with an S/V/C structure). Determining how words, phrases, and clauses relate to each other within the sentence is the purpose of the so-called *generalizing* syntactic analysis – *G-nalysis*.

GENERALIZATION IN SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS (G-nalysis)

G-nalysis focuses on the *mechanism of meaning creation*, on how we connect, blend, and expand simple ideas into larger chunks of meaning, connecting word-meanings into *phrases* (groups of word-meanings that act as ‘team’ to serve one function – as an adjective, noun or adverb), and dependent *clauses* (groups of word-meanings that act together as an Adjective, Noun or Adverb, in the form of a nexal pattern S/V/C). This surprisingly simple and exquisitely elegant rational language mechanism uses, as we have seen, only two basic principles of connection, **Synthesis/Nexus** and **Analysis/Modification**:

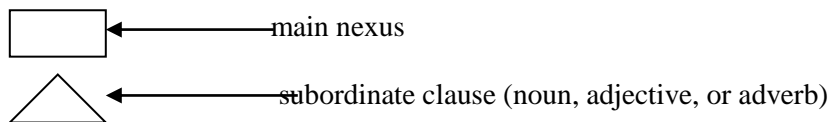
- (I) **Nexus** is the nucleus, the ‘bare bones’ of the sentence, the naming of *what* we speak about (Subject) and *what* we say *about* it (the Predicate, made up of the finite Verb and Compliment [S/V/C]; the order of these constituents is language-specific),⁴ and
- (II) **Modification** implies *recursion*; the fact that any one or all of the major sentence pattern constituents (S/V/C) may be *described* or associated with other (simple or complex) ideas, based on Resemblance, Contiguity, and Cause/Effect, or all three types of association, as is the case in any generalization.

This open-ended mechanism allows for infinite expansion of the original sentence meaning through embedding modifiers into the main nexus slots.

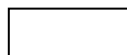
- (I) The first step in G-nalysis focuses on identifying all S/V/C patterns present in the sentence.
- (II) The second step, through asking relevant questions, aims to figure out the *logical relationships* between the main nexal pattern and the embedded ones:

G-NALYSIS

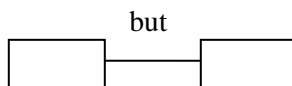
Key Symbols:



(1) //All great truths / begin as blasphemies/ /.
 S V C_{zero}



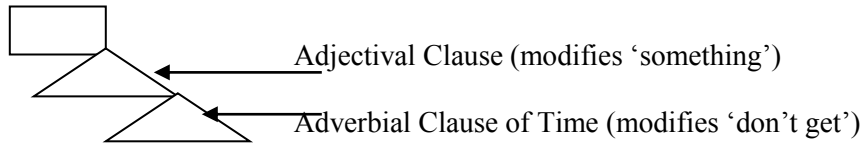
(2) //You / can twist / perceptions//, but // reality / won't budge//.
 S₁ V₁ C₁(DO) S₂ V₂ C_{zero}



⁴ The Object slot of the traditional sentence pattern is designated **C** for *Compliment*; this is because, apart from Direct/Indirect Objects (DO/IO), there are three other ways of filling it: it may have **Zero Compliment**, as in *I am*, or have a Predicate Noun (PN): *Peter is a doctor*, or have a Predicate Adjective (PA), i.e., *She is clever*, to fill it.

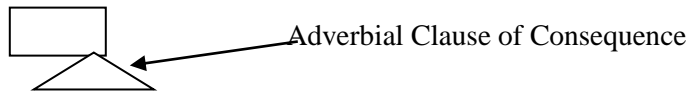
(3) //Experience / is / something // you / don't get / until just after /you / need / it//.

S_1 V_1 $C_1(PN)$ $\xrightarrow{\text{Which something?}}$ S_2 $\xrightarrow{V_2}$ $C_2 \text{ zero}$ $\xrightarrow{\text{Until when?}}$ S_3 $\xrightarrow{V_2}$ $C_3(DO)$



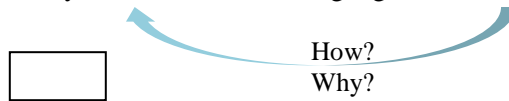
With what consequence?

(4) //I / think //, //therefore / I / am// ~ *Descartes*



(5) //Drawing on my fine command of language, / I / said / nothing//.*

S V $C_{(DO)}$

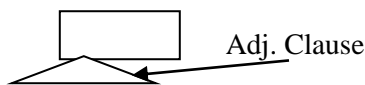


* The adverb of manner (or reason) phrase precedes the Subject.

Which everything?

(6) //Everything // you / can imagine // is / real. // ~ *Picasso*

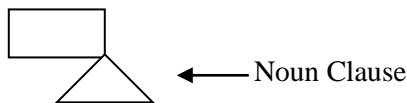
S_1 $\xrightarrow{S_2}$ V_1 $C_1(PA)$



What?

(7) //True knowledge / exists in knowing / that /you / know / nothing.// ~ *Socrates*

S_1 V_1 $C_1(IO)$ $\xrightarrow{S_2}$ V_2 $C_2(DO)$



Which tracks?

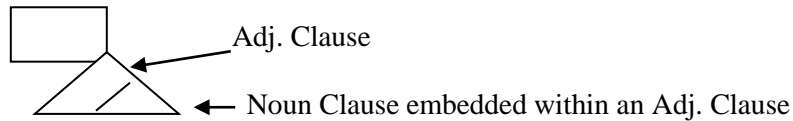
(8) // Knowledge and belief / are / two separate tracks // that / run parallel to each other and never meet, except in the child.// ~ *Godfried Bomans: Buitelingen II*

$S_{1.1}$ $S_{1.2}$ V_1 $C_1(PN)$ $\xrightarrow{S_2}$ $V_{2.1}$ $V_{2.2}$



(9) //Brain / is / an apparatus // with which /we / think / we / think.// ~ Ambrose Bierce

Which apparatus? What?



G-nalysis is flexible: it allows for ambiguity, so inherent in language. The functions of words and groups of words (phrases and clauses) may be analyzed differently, depending on one's perception / the kind of generalization one makes. In example (7), for example, the phrase *in knowing* can be analyzed as

- (a) **Indirect Object** (IO) in the complement slot, if the question '(exists) *In what?*' is asked, or as
- (b) An **adverb of place phrase**, if the question '*Where?*' is asked instead; in this case, the complement would be analyzed as zero.

This flexibility of G-nalysis reflects the fluid nature of 'live' meanings we create and perceive, as we 'play our language games'; it accounts for the indeterminacy of meaning (meaning as use) that Ludwig Wittgenstein and Bachtin wrote about.

G-nalysis reflects the way we think / reason, which is why it is both enjoyable and easy to make sense of. There is every reason to believe that this is why it is so popular among the University of Papua New Guinea students.

CONCLUSION

In summary, I have argued that:

1. Language *Is* Verbal Thought: every word, every sentence is a generalization (an act of thought);
2. Universal principles of human understanding govern all human thought: we associate ideas by Resemblance, Contiguity in Time/Space, and Cause/Effect; all three types of association the 'sinews' of generalization;
3. Word-meanings are the smallest units of language; we create progressively larger chunks of meaning by combining word-meanings and groups of word-meanings together;
4. Synthesis and Analysis are the two universal principles of both thought and speech (sentence structure): **Nexus** (the language-specific Subject-Predicate patterns) and **Modification** (associations based on Resemblance, Contiguity, and Cause/Effect);

5. Word-meanings *develop* (in the collective mind, as well as in our individual minds);
6. Word-meanings also vary, depending on context of use and individual perceptions of speakers;
7. *Generalization* is the *Rational Mechanism of Language* / Verbal Thought;
8. Grammaticalization is driven by the generalizing associations between ideas (based on Resemblance, Contiguity, and Cause/Effect) in the collective mind of the speech community;
9. Generalizing attitude in syntactic analysis (G-nalysis) follows the natural logic of the human mind and captures the fluid nature of the meanings we create.

A synthesis of Vygotsky's and David Hume's ideas has provided us with the wide-angle lens of dialectics that alone can capture Language 'live' – in its interconnectedness, movement, change and evolution.

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TOK PLES IN TEXTING & SOCIAL NETWORKING: PNG 2010

Olga Temple

University of Papua New Guinea
olga.temple77@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of a four-month study of the impact that new technologies, such as the Internet, mobile phones and SMS technology have had on the indigenous languages of Papua New Guinea. The study, conducted by UPNG linguistics students, documented some recent changes in the researchers' own languages. The study aimed to explain language change within the theoretical framework of dialectical linguistics (presented in the previous paper), and to compile a baseline lexicon of neologisms in these languages.

The resulting publication by the University Bookshop was presented to the conference (book contents and cover pages are presented in the Appendix).

Key words: SMS, texting, jargon, language change, acronyms, Internet, new technologies, mobile /cell phones, Tok Pisin, Tok Ples, dialectical linguistics

INTRODUCTION

Papua New Guinea's 841 listed indigenous languages, of which Papuan make up about 78% and Melanesian – roughly 20% (SIL http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=PG) are bubbling away in the melting pot of our 'Flat World' reality, 'spiced up' with some Philippines, Chinese and Indian flavors. Most ingredients of this rich linguistic 'soup' are melting, and some have dissolved in others without a trace; a few, however, have coalesced into solid structures. Powerful socio-economic and political forces are centrifuging the diverse cultures into a composite national identity, held together by three lingua francas – English, Motu and Tok Pisin (the 'baby' of the union between English and the indigenous languages, with an admixture of other European 'transplants,' such as German and Portuguese).

In contrast to our previous study⁵ which had looked at the impact of mobile phones on UPNG students' use of English and Tok Pisin, this project attempted to describe linguistic changes occurring in the Tok Ples languages of Papua New Guinea under the influence of new technologies. These developments were viewed as part of language change sweeping across all continents in our new, flat, 'online' world.

⁵ Temple et al.: 2009

Theoretical framework of our analysis (past and present)

The theoretical framework of our analysis rests on the basic principles of dialectics and dialectical linguistics, outlined below:

- The whole is more than the sum of its parts. Language is more than the sum of its ‘units and rules.’
- Language is the social tool for constructing and communicating complex meanings.
- The mechanism of the language tool consists of conventional word-meanings and rules for putting them together to form complex/ composite meanings (phrases and sentences, the ‘flesh’ of thoughts).
- Word-meanings are the smallest units of language – they retain all of its psychological (meaning), physical (sound structures), social (communication), and historical (existing in time) properties.
- A word is a union of thought and sound. The ‘qualitative distinction between sensation and thought is the presence in the latter of a generalised reflection of reality, which is also the essence of word meaning: and consequently that meaning is an act of thought in the full sense of the term’ (Vygotsky: 1934).
- A word without meaning is an empty sound; meaning, therefore, is a criterion of ‘word,’ its indispensable component (Ibid.).
- The fusion of thought and sound in word meaning is the product of the historical development of human consciousness (individual, as well as collective).
- Word-meanings are fluid – they grow, change, and develop. In the historical evolution of language, the very structure of meaning and its psychological nature also change:
- ‘From primitive generalisations, verbal thought rises to the most abstract concepts. It is not merely the content of a word that changes, but the way in which reality is generalised and reflected in a word’ (Ibid.) [we see this, for example, in the grammaticalization process].
- Three principles of all human understanding (and all generalization): association of ideas by resemblance, contiguity in space & time, and cause/ effect (Hume: 1748).
- Every word-meaning is a generalization in the collective mind of the speech community; the meaning of every sentence is a generalization in a speaker’s individual mind.
- In order to form a concept (generalization), we must be able not only to connect, but also to abstract, to single out its characteristic elements, and to view them separately from the ‘totality of the concrete experience in which they are embedded’ (Vygotsky: 1934).

- Speakers use the words, each with its own socially assigned meaning, to create sentences (thoughts), just as artists use tiles of different colors to create mosaics. How the tiles are put together determines the overall image ('meaning' of the mosaic):
Tiles acquire their meaning in the context of the other tiles in the mosaic (i.e., brown tiles may be the feathers of the birds, the arrows, or the table!); their true meaning is their *use* in the mosaic. Words acquire their true meaning in the nexus of the proposition (i.e., "What's your beef?")
- The whole is more than the sum of its parts; meaning of the mosaic is more than the sum of its tiles; the meaning of the proposition is, likewise, more than the sum of its words – it also depends on how they have been put together ('Paul eats fish' vs. 'Fish eats Paul'). Sentences (thoughts) are mosaics of composite meaning.
- Just as breathing is both inhalation and exhalation, thinking is both synthesis and analysis of ideas.
- To make a mosaic image, we must not only connect our tiles together into a meaningful pattern, but also describe, add enough detail to it. Similarly, when making a sentence, we must not only put words together into a basic meaningful structure (S/V/C), but also to add detail (description) to the major sentence constituents (Subject, Verb, and Compliment).
- We spin our verbal 'webs of significance' by putting word-meanings together into the nexus of the proposition (synthesis) and describing parts of the nexus by associating them with other ideas, based on some Resemblance, Contiguity, or Cause/ Effect relationship (analysis).
- In live communication, words and their meanings are relatively independent of each other (as in this exchange: You dog! – I love you, too!). Word meanings in use are so fluid, because ideas exist only in our minds. We all perceive the world's mosaics with our own eyes and ears, and we 'make sense' of them only in our own heads. Each mind's eye views the world from its own perspective; its clarity of vision depends on many factors, such as the level of one's cognitive development, experience, emotional /physical state, the context and circumstances of the exchange, etc.
- Speakers use the common social 'currency of thought exchange' (words of their language) to create the 'mosaic images' of their own ideas.
- Generalization is the matrix of universal grammar of verbal thought; it casts, constantly reshaping, the diverse forms and structures of all of the world's languages.

We use Language to communicate our ideas about the world we live in. Our world and our ideas about it are in constant flux, development and change, and so is the 'flesh' of our thoughts – language. New words enter the language, when novel concepts crystallize in our collective consciousness – when 'several

memories of the same thing produce finally ... a single experience' (Aristotle: 300 B.C.). It is in that sense that 'every word is already a generalisation' in the collective mind of the speech community.

THE NATURE & SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study of how new technologies have affected the Tok Ples languages of Papua New Guinea is a follow-up on the previous study of student texting lingo on the campuses of UPNG (Temple et al.: 2009). Instead of looking at linguistic change in English and Tok Pisin, the languages of the multiethnic university community, it focused on the developments in the Tok Ples languages of the researchers' wantok groups. It was conducted by eight final year Linguistics students in the Linguistics & Modern Languages Strand, UPNG,⁶ with Olga Temple as supervisor.

ISSUE

Significant changes in language use have been observed in Port Moresby since early 2007, when the use of mobile phones became ubiquitous in PNG. Morphological /lexical innovation and semantic shift have occurred in all the languages spoken on the university campus and beyond.

HYPOTHESIS

UPNG students and their wantoks have created a "texting" lingo to meet their new communication needs which include (1) naming new concepts; (2) inventing a more economical way of communicating; (3) inventing an easier and faster way of communicating typed messages; (4) ensuring targeted messaging in code, incomprehensible to 'outsiders.'

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The study aimed to document and explain changes in researchers' own languages: Foe (Lin Berry), Hiri Motu (Bobby Jack), Iduna (Charlotte Laudiwana), Loni, a.k.a. Ndrokou (Nadia Lawes), Yil (Emmanuel Maipe), Iatmul (Deborah Salle), Boiken (Filomina Sion), and Weri (Xavier Winnia). Olga Temple, with the help of native speakers, collected data on Dobu, Keapara, Kuanua, Mussau, Solos, & Taulil, bringing the number of the languages in this study up to fourteen.

⁶ Lin Berry, Bobby Jack, Charlotte Laudiwana, Nadia Lawes, Emmanuel Maipe, Deborah Salle, Filomina Sion and Xavier Winnia, all of whom are speakers of different indigenous languages of Papua New Guinea

Study objectives included (1) publishing a baseline lexicon of neologisms in the fourteen languages, and (2) validating theoretical conjectures regarding language change⁷ that guided us in our analysis.

Researchers worked with their own wantok communities to collect new words and phrases that people use to communicate through the new media of SMS and social networking sites (i.e., FB and YouTube), and to refer to new concepts in their everyday lives (new technologies, behaviors, etc.).

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

In all, we examined the impact of mobile phone technology on the use of fourteen indigenous languages of Papua New Guinea amongst wantok communities, residing mostly in and around Port Moresby.

Methods of data collection included:

- Observation of language use in the student community and amongst wantok groups;
- Harvesting data from popular social networking sites, such as FB and YouTube;
- Cross-Sectional Survey (‘convenience sampling’): anonymous pre-tested questionnaires, designed to document Tok Ples texting lingo used amongst the UPNG student community and the various wantok groups. These were distributed to a representative sample of cell phone users in both UPNG campuses (Waigani and Taurama), as well as amongst the wider wantok communities (i.e., the researchers’ villages).

The questionnaire was translated into Tok Pisin and all the respective languages, to facilitate the respondents’ comprehension. It also included a selected list of common computer terms to be translated into each Tok Ples examined.

FINDINGS

Our findings, based on questionnaire returns, include lists of words and phrases in fourteen indigenous languages of Papua New Guinea: Foe, Hiri Motu, Iduna, Loni (a.k.a. Ndrokou), Yil, Iatmul, Boiken, Weri, Dobu, Keapara (Aroma dialect), Kuanua, Mussau, Solos, and Taulil. We also collected lists of selected computer terms, translated into the respective languages by the respondents to the questionnaire.

DISCUSSION & GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Our data on just fourteen of the hundreds of indigenous languages of Papua New Guinea provides a glimpse of the dynamic processes of linguistic change at work, reflective of the wider socio-economic, cultural and demographic changes in the bubbles of Port Moresby ‘melting pot.’

⁷ Dialectal linguistics views generalization as the Rational Language Mechanism, driving much of linguistic change.

Mobile phones technology has clearly been embraced by all strata of the PNG society; in cities, as well as in the villages, most people use cell phones to communicate with family, friends and wantoks. In the two years since our 2009 study, Telikom has significantly expanded their wireless communication services, such as x'cess wireless phones and x'cess Internet modems. Together with Digicel, they are drivers of much of the ongoing social and cultural transformation of PNG society.

Our 2009 investigation focused mainly on English and Tok Pisin texting jargon, engendered by SMS. This cheap and effective technology provided a totally new, exclusive way of instant silent communication, particularly appreciated by the young and tech-savvy student community.

In our 2009 analysis of SMS lingo, we viewed it in the context of the universal principles of human cognition, arguing that UPNG student “texting” lingo was shaped by the students’ generalizing minds and modified by the incentives and constraints of the SMS medium (Temple, et al.: 2009). The same universal principles of human understanding underlie, in our view, the diverse grammars of all human languages, including English, Tok Pisin, Boikin, Dobu, Foe, Hiri Motu, Iduna, Iatmul, Keapara, Kuanua, Loniu, Solos, Taulil, Weri and Yil that we examined in this study. Our findings, however, suggest that the Internet, mobile phones and, in particular, SMS technology have impacted Tok Ples languages differently from the way they did English and Tok Pisin. This is evident in that

- The average amount of data we collected in each of the thirteen Tok Ples languages we worked on is much shorter than the well over a thousand items in each list that we ‘harvested’ in 2009; respondents were often at a loss, when asked to write down the Tok Ples words they commonly use in texting, saying that they ‘just use the ordinary words’ which they would normally use when speaking (suggesting that they do not use any new texting lingo)
- Most of the words in the lists we obtained represent ‘culture free’ concepts of common everyday communication, sometimes (but not always) abbreviated – this is in sharp contrast to the thousands of acronyms and shorthand of Tok Pisin and English SMS lingo that we obtained in 2009
- All of the word lists contain a large proportion of Tok Pisin words and acronyms, suggesting a widespread Tok Pisin influence on the indigenous languages spoken in urban centers, such as Port Moresby.
- Words of English/Tok Pisin origin in the Tok Ples lists of computer terms show a marked influence of Tok Ples phonology (i.e., Foe ‘bulete’ for ‘bullet’; ‘borosa’ for ‘browse’; ‘bolde’ for ‘bold’, etc.).

What are the reasons for these differences? On the basis of our (admittedly, limited) data, we can make several generalizations with regard to observed changes in language use:

(1) There are relatively few new ‘SMS’ words in Tok Ples languages, because

- Residents of Port Moresby, since they typically have much wider cross-cultural communication needs, habitually use Tok Pisin when texting
- SMS is generally not very popular in wantok communities (particularly in the villages), due to low Tok Ples literacy levels, lack of language development, or a combination of both.
- Some tonal languages (like Weri, which has two phonemic tones) are difficult to transcribe due to lack of appropriate symbols on cell phone keypads; in order to avoid misunderstanding, speakers resort to using Tok Pisin SMS.
- Tok Pisin SMS adequately supplies all the communication needs of all Tok Ples speakers in terms of referencing new concepts which have no indigenous names.

(2) Internet use has not yet become commonplace in village communities, due to lack of infrastructural development, power supply and education; therefore rural dwellers’ participation in social networking sites, such as FB and MySpace, is currently almost non-existent.

(3) Tok Ples SMS, and particularly the new technological/ computer terms are typically borrowed from Tok Pisin which, in turn, feeds on English words / jargon.

(4) The Tok Ples borrowings from Tok Pisin / English are heavily influenced by Tok Ples phonology.

(5) Tok Ples SMS samples collected exhibit the same morphological changes that have been observed in other texting lingos, i.e.,

- Words tend to be shortened through vowel deletion in easily recognizable words (i.e. ‘npra’ for Solos ‘napora’ (basket), ‘vavi’ for Iduna ‘vavine’ (girlfriend, wife), etc.
- People commonly use acronyms (such as ‘CU’ for ‘see you,’ IOU’ for ‘I owe you’ or IOT for ‘in order to,’ etc.
- Human creativity often takes precedence over time and even cost constraints: fancy symbols, such as @ or 2x, for example, are expressions of individual flair.
- Code switching from Tok Ples to TokPisin and English is common, especially when communicating on less traditional subjects; for example, Solos ‘N'meh ere’ for Tok Pisin ‘Km lo hia’/ English ‘Cme h're’, etc.

(6) Tok Ples phonology tends to affect the pronunciation of words of English/ Tok Pisin origin; for example, Foe ‘kibode’ for ‘keyboard’, ‘kibede’ for ‘keypad’, etc.

(7) In SMS/ Tok Ples words of English origin, people generally tend to represent the sounds of the words, not the English spelling, e.g. call →kol, feel → fil, etc.

(8) Our results indicate that new technologies, by providing new channels for wantok and cross-cultural communication, have accelerated the processes of linguistic change in the Tok Ples languages of PNG.

(9) Linguistic change in most of the Tok Ples languages examined exhibited

- A strong (and growing) influence of English and, particularly, Tok Pisin on all indigenous languages of Papua New Guinea; and
- The unfolding of Tok Ples SMS which shares common features with other SMS lingos, as a result of universal principles of human thought and similar incentive and constraints of the SMS communication medium.
- The observed strong influence of English on Tok Pisin and the overwhelming influence of Tok Pisin on Tok Ples communication in multicultural environments indicate long term Tok Ples vulnerability.

Justifiable criticism has been made that the data sets we collected exhibit a high degree of variation in terms of consistency and nature of the items they contain. This may be attributed to the individuality of the researchers and randomness of their wantok respondents. Our findings suggest that Tok Ples languages are mostly used when making phone calls, as opposed to texting; this may be explained by the low levels of Tok Ples literacy in the rural communities and the rather limited scope of Tok Ples use in the multicultural setting of Port Moresby.

Another reason for the relatively 'stunted' growth of Tok Ples SMS may be that phone pad symbols are inadequate for use in tonal languages (i.e., Weru). Most of our respondents did not text, they make ordinary phone calls. Some of them were, in fact, rather perplexed, as to which words to write down - they said, they use the language in the 'ordinary' way.

To facilitate comparative study, future research may, perhaps, come up with a kind of 'Swadesh' SMS list (the list of computer terms we included was somewhat irrelevant to most Tok Ples speakers in 2010).

SIGNIFICANCE

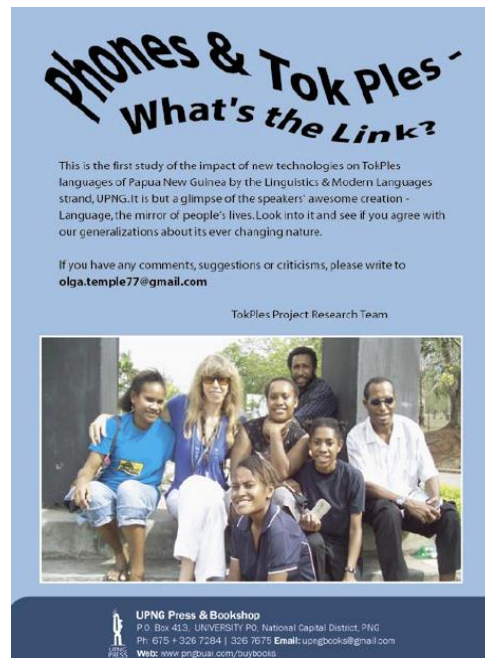
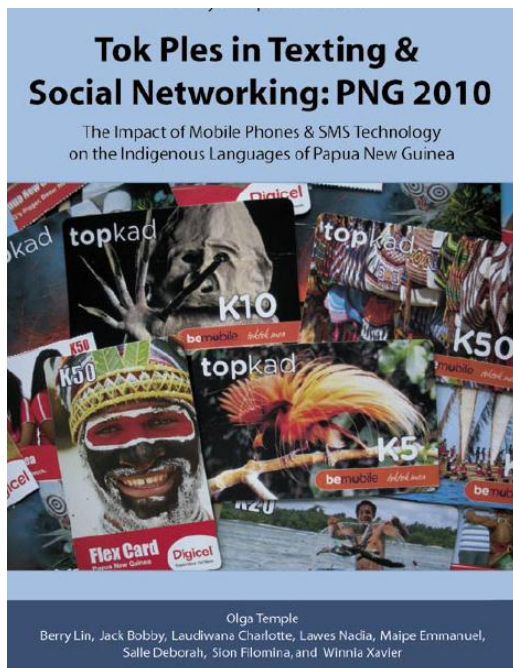
This research provides some baseline data on the 'budding' Tok Ples texting lingo and observations with regard to the accelerating processes of general language change taking place in the indigenous languages of Papua New Guinea under the influence of globalization and new technologies. It is hoped that, by providing evidence of long term Tok Ples vulnerability, this study may stimulate appropriate government action in the field of language planning and education.

This study also corroborates our broader theoretical generalizations about the nature of human language, its 'Rational Mechanism' and language change / development in general.

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APPENDIX I



Front and back covers of
Tok Ples in Texting & Social Networking: PNG 2010

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A DEFINING FEATURE OF THE TOKPISIN LEXICON

Dicks Rae Thomas

University of Papua New Guinea
tamandet5@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

A number of scholarly works on the lexicology and lexicography of Tokpisin have already been published. Some of these works are widely read internationally⁸. However, the Tokpisin lexicon is “exploding”. This calls for more research to be done. This paper presents an alternative, bilingual approach to Tokpisin lexicon. Instead of focusing mainly on the needs of English speakers, this approach aims to help native Tokpisin speakers as well, by providing them with a guide to reading and writing standardized and emerging standard forms. The various meanings of each entry, whether it is a simple word, a compound word, or a phrase, is explained fully with the help of an illustrative sentence and its free English translation; in many cases, cultural notes are also provided. The culture of the Tokpisin speakers, reflected in the words and phrases of the language, has not been captured fully in the current publications, which lack examples of many institutionalized labels and discourse paradigms. This research attempts to investigate and to incorporate the semantics and pragmatics of these labels and discourses. The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2010 edition) appropriately labels its main database ‘Dictionary and Culture’; this research aims to do the same for Tokpisin for Vision2050.

Key words: dictionary-making, lexicology, lexicography, defining feature, Tokpisin, paradigm shift.

INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the defining feature of the Tokpisin lexicon and compares two different concepts of the defining feature found in: (a) Mihalic’s work (*The Jacaranda Dictionary and Grammar of Melanesian Pidgin*) and (b) Thomas’ research work on the *Melanesian Creole-English Bilingual Dictionary and Culture*⁹.

PURPOSE OF A DEFINING FEATURE

A defining feature of a lexicon is basically a set of words and phrases which form the framework or template that people use to talk about or describe a lexical item. Snyder says that,

“The purpose of a defining vocabulary is to provide a metalanguage with which one may talk about language and meaning. Normally this metalanguage is specifically designed ... to

⁸A specific reference is made to Frank Mihalic’s *The Jacaranda Dictionary and Grammar of Melanesian Pidgin*.

⁹The research includes all three dialects of Melanesian Creole – Tokpisin in Papua New Guinea, Pijin in the Solomons, and Bislama in Vanuatu.

communicate more precisely the meanings or definitions of words and phrases. [In other words], it allows the reader or learner to understand more precisely and easily the meanings of words and phrases” (1996:23).

Some of the features or metalanguage that is used includes parts of speech, homonyms, synonyms, antonyms, variants, cross referencing, etc. The lexicographer decides their sequence in the process of recording and documenting meanings.

RESERVATIONS ON A DEFINING FEATURE

One of the arguments against a defining feature has something to do with the idea of universal semantic primitives. This argument points out that the lexicon of each language is based on a small set of universal semantic primitives. It promotes the idea that a defining vocabulary uses these primitives to define all words and phrases of other languages (Snyder, 1996:25).

Other researchers argue that universal primitives are inadequate or based on wrong information. Based on that premise, they conclude that the whole concept of the defining feature is therefore erroneous.

Another reason for harboring reservations with regard to defining vocabulary is the hindrance it causes to lexicographer. Sherman Kuhn points out that,

“One can create definitions which may have aesthetic value, beauty, and elegance, even solemnity, but which have been liberated from the bondage of utility (1980:186)”.

The advice from Kuhn is that theories and rules about defining words and phrases can be made, but they do not necessarily make a dictionary compiler more competent. At the same time, though, Kuhn believes that a defining feature is still an excellent tool.

The third reason for lingering reservations about the concept of the defining feature is the lack of rigorous criteria. Many linguistic works are modeled on scientific paradigms. The scholars, therefore, have certain notions that languages have strict rules like the phrase structure rules. Snyder comments, in addition, that works which are modeled on scientific paradigms are “similar to the phrase structure rules that govern computer programming languages” (1996:26).

Human language, however, is not the same as computer programming languages. Human language is creative; it is governed by logic-driven patterns. Every speech community constantly creates new grammatical patterns; new Tokpisin morphosyntactic patterns are, thus, also constantly emerging.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOUR OF THE DEFINING FEATURE

The defining feature of the lexicon has facilitated and improved lexicographers' work. Two criticisms lexicographers faced in the past were the use of circular definitions, and the lack of accepted pedagogical practices. The concept of the defining feature emerged because lexicologists and lexicographers had for a long time yearned for a better and improved way to avoid circular definitions, and for a sound pedagogical approach to dictionary compilations. Exemplifying traditional circular dictionary definitions, Snyder uses the following:

“Ask is defined in terms of call on, but call on is defined in terms of ask; another meaning of ask is defined in terms of invite, but invite is defined in terms of ask. The reader is sent from one verb to another, and back, and can never find out what the meanings of ask, invite, and call on” (1996:29).

Many language students have difficulty understanding definitions of words in the standard dictionary. Fritz Neubauer says teachers of foreign languages have difficulty using bilingual dictionaries. He reports on his own students:

“... They cannot understand the definitions of the words because the definitions do not proceed from the known to the unknown” (1987:49).

To solve these problems, Neubauer recommends the use of a well-constructed defining feature of the lexicon. The defining feature of a language lexicon must elucidate meanings, leaving no room for circular or ambiguous definitions, so typical of many monolingual and bilingual dictionaries.

Dictionaries are compiled to meet certain needs. If a dictionary does not meet certain expectations of the user, then that dictionary won't be used.

MIHALIC'S DEFINING FEATURE

Mihalic's work targets a non-Tokpisin speaker who is basically an English speaker wishing to learn Tokpisin. Naturally, Mihalic's Tokpisin-English defining feature of the lexicon must reflect his target audience; it includes:

- An entry;
- Etymology;
- English primary sense or senses;
- (Phrasal entries with English equivalents);
- (A sense number);
- (An English sense);
- (A list of synonyms);
- (A phrasal or a few entries with English equivalents)

THOMAS' DEFINING FEATURE

Thomas proposes an expansion of the defining feature, which includes:

- An entry;
- A homonym;
- A variant or variants;
- (Etymology)
- part of speech;
- (Domain or Status);
- An English gloss;
- An illustrative sentence;
- A free English translation;
- (A synonym or synonyms)
- (A cross reference)
- (Cultural notes)
- (A sub-entry)
- (An English gloss)
- (An illustrative sentence (secondary sense))
- (An English free translation (secondary sense))

The lexical item *pig* has been used to compare the two defining features (these are shown in Appendix A).

CONCLUSION

There is a difference in the treatment of *pik* in the two defining features of the Tokpisin lexicon. Mihalic has one primary entry with eight phrases. Thomas has thirty-nine words and phrases recorded. For Mihalic, his target audience is not the Tokpisin, but the English speaker. For Thomas, the Tokpisin speaker and the English speaker are both his target audiences. Thomas' defining feature aims at making reading more interesting, captivating, and at the same time pedagogical for both audiences. This is realized by the Tokpisin entry with its optional variation(s) and obligatory characteristics which include parts of speech, etymology¹⁰, status, the illustrative sentence, and its free English translation. Thomas also provides cultural background to Tokpisin words and phrases, especially words that have experienced a paradigm shift, e.g. *kilimpik* – a ceremony where members of the community are gathered to share food and, of course, pigs' meat.

¹⁰ English words and phrases are just too many to acknowledge, so it was felt unnecessary to show. Only words or phrases borrowed from local languages and others are acknowledged.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the belief of the author that vernacular dictionaries must meet certain expectations which include standardization¹¹ and pedagogical considerations. To enhance dictionary users' reading experience, while also promoting people's awareness of what the work of the lexicographer involves, I recommend that:

- Speakers of the language, who are interested in participating in the dictionary-making project, be taught dictionary-making skills, as well as all relevant computer software; and that
- A committee must be put in place to receive, examine, and pass dictionaries submitted. Two or four native speakers must be appointed as members of the committee.

APPENDIX A

MIHALIC'S OUTPUT

pik, pig, pork

banispik – pigsty

pikbilongples – a domestic pig, a tame pig

pik mama – a brood sow

pik man – a boar

pikmeri – a sow

pikinipik – a piglet

piksusu – a brood sow

wailpik, pikbilong bus – a wild pig

¹¹ Especially for languages that have a number of varieties or dialects.

THOMAS' OUTPUT

banis pik Variant: pikbanis.comp [n+n].pigsty.Tupelapiktasol i stap long banispik. There are only two pigs in the pigsty.

bilakpik comp [adj+n].black pig.ani.Bilak pik em i winimol narapela kain pik. There are more black pigs than all the others. See: waitpik.

grispik comp [n+n].pigs' fat.food. Ol i rabim grispik long skin bilongol, naol i go singsing. They rubbed pigs' fat onto their body, and went a traditional dance.

grispik ingratiate, to make somebody like you esp. the opposite sex.fig.Yu givim em planti grispik, bai yu winim laik bilong en. You give her a lot of pig's fat, you will win her heart.

kala pik Variant: kalakala pik. comp [n+n]. spotted pig.ani. Kalapik em gat wait na bilak spot long en. The spotted pig has white and black spots.

kilim pik1vphr [v+n].to slaughter pig. Mi kilim pik bilong tisaasde. I slaughtered the teacher's pig yesterday.

kilim pik2 nphr [v+n].apig slaughter ceremony. Jesi bin marit na ol kilim pik long Zak Veli insaitWapenamanda. Jessy got married and they had a pig killing ceremony in the Zak Valley ofWapenamanda. See: pikkilim.[Note: In a pig slaughter ceremony some forty or more huge fat pigs are brought to a central spot where they are slaughtered, dressed and cooked, normally in huge mumus. The leaders share the pigs' meat to the members of the community. This is predominantly practiced in the Highlands of the country.]

pik1 Variant: pig.n.pig.ani.Yu gat hamas pik? How many pigs do you have? Syn: swain.

pik pig.fig.Yu pik! Mi no laikim pain bilongyu. You're a pig! I don't like the way you behave.

pik eating too much. fig. Em wanpela pik, nogat hap kaikai stap (Em kaikai olgeta kaikai)He's a pig, there's no left-over food (He's eaten up all the food)

pik wealth.fig.Em gat pik.He is wealthy.[Note: In many parts of PNG, esp. in the Highlands region, a person who has many pigs, is considered wealthy.]

pik bride price.fig.Hamas pik long gelprenbilong Pol?How many pigs (are earmarked)for Paul's girl friend?[Note: A part from money, garden foods, store goods and foods, pigs are used to pay for the bride price.]

pik pork.food.OlSevende no save kaikaipik.The Seventh-Day Adventists don' eat pork.See: kilimpik.

pik2 n.plectrum.Yu save yusimpik long pilaigita?Do you normally use the plectrum to play the guitar?

pik3 vi.pick something.Milukimem, em i pik long hap nabihain go pik long hap.I saw her pick (something) there and then pick (something) over there.

- pik** pick on somebody, choose. Maski bin gat planti save lain, tasol tisa pik long mi. Although there were many knowledgeable people, the teacher chose me.
- pik bilong** Variant: piklong.phr [n+poss].pig belongs to. Em pik bilong Fa'afo. This pig belongs to Fa'afo.
- pik bilong bus** wild pig or wild boar. Ol pik bilong bus nogat planti gris. Wild pigs don't have a lot of fat.
- pik bilong ples** domesticated pigs. Tama gat planti pik bilong ples. Tama has many domesticated pigs.
- pik bilong waitman** hybrid pigs. Olpikbilongwaitman i bikpela moa. The hybrid pigs are huge (than the local ones).
- pikbilongsalim** pig for sale. Popo gat tripela pik bilong salim. Popo has three pigs for sale.
- pikkarim** comp [n+v].pig given birth. Pik karim pikinini aninit long haus. The sow has given birth underneath the house.
- pikkarim** taken away by pig. Pikkarimrausimpinisolpikinibilong en. The sow has taken her piglets away.
- pikkarim** born to pig.fig. Pasinbilongyunogut, pikkarimyu o man. Your ways are not good, were you born to pig or what.
- pikkilim** comp [n+v].killed by pigs. PikkilimtupeladokbilongRumints. The pig killed Rumints' two dogs.
- pikkilim** strong desire to eat pork or hem.fig. Pik-kilim mi! I really like to eat pork.
- pikgris** comp [n+n].lard.food. Kais laikimpikgrisbilongpraimpotaito. Kais needs lard to fry potato. See: grisfik.
- pik haus** Variant: hausfik.comp [n+n].pigs' house. Ol wok long wokimtupelapikhausbilong en long ples. They are building two pigs' house for her at hone. Syn: hausfik. See: banisfik.
- pikhet** Variant: pikhed.comp [n+n].pig's head. Ol i givimWanpispikhet. They gave Wanpis a pig's head. [Note: In some places the pig's head signifies leadership or importance of the person. And so when someone is given a pig's head, the person is acknowledged.]
- pikinini pik** comp [n+n].piglet.ani. Mi baim dispel pikinini pik long Sikirap maket. I bought this piglet from Sikirap market.
- pikman** Variant: manpik.comp [n+n].boar.ani. Dispelapikmanol no katimbolbilong en. This pig is not castrated. See: pikmeri.
- pikman** womanizer.fig. Yu wanpelapikmanstret. You're a real womanizer. See: pesmeri.
- pikmeri** Variant: meripik.comp [n+n].sow.ani. Dispelapikmerikarimtenpelapaippikinipik. This sow gave birth to fifteen piglets. See: pikman.
- piksosis** Variant: sosispok.comp [n+n].pork sausage.food. Meribilongtisapraimpiksosisbilongsalim long maket. The teacher's wife fried pork sausage to sell at the market.

wailpikcomp [adj+n].pigs of the bush.ani.Olwailpikbagarapimgaden taro.The wild pigs spoiled the taro garden.Syn: welpik.

waitpela pik phr [adj+n].pigs that are white.Yu baimwaitpelapik?Did you buy the pig that is white?See: waitpik.

waitpikcomp [adj+n].white pig.ani.Torato gat tupelawaitpik.Torato has two white pigs.See: waitpelapik. bilakpik.

welpik comp [adj+n].wild pig.ani.Ol i sutimtupelawelpik long bikpela bus.They shot two wild pigs in the jungle.Syn: wailpik.

welpik loafer.fig.Heiwelpiktraimnastapisi.Hey loafer settle down.

welpik big headed.fig.Hey welpik, harimtok.Hey big headed, listen to advice.

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Original Articles

MEANING IN MELANESIA, & SOME CHANGES

Peter C Lincoln

Department of Linguistics
University of Hawai'i
linc@hawaii.rr.com

ABSTRACT

Several generations ago Melanesians adapted English sounding words to their own use while retaining their underlying Melanesian perspective. To a listener, they would seem to be learning English words. But we have evidence that they were applying English sounds to areas of meaning specified by a Melanesian perspective.

This paper presents evidence from Tok Pisin to highlight the Melanesian perspective. It turns out that the perspective within Tok Pisin is not static. Tok Pisin is changing the areas of meaning to shapes that seem less exotic to English speakers.

Evidence for the earlier Melanesian perspective comes from several areas of the language:

1. the pronoun system
2. the meanings of some verbs
3. translations of *with*
4. some kinship terminology

Evidence of ongoing change offers challenges for further investigation.

Key words: Change, comitative, instrument, kinship, pronoun, semantics, Tok Pisin.

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BACKGROUND

Several generations ago Melanesians adapted English sounding words to their own use while retaining their underlying Melanesian perspective. To a listener, they would seem to be learning English words. But we have evidence that they were applying English sounds to areas of meaning specified by a Melanesian perspective. To better understand what I mean by the terms perspective and area of meaning, consider an English speaker learning German. First, one learns that G¹²: *essen* expresses the meaning of E: eat. Later, one learns that the areas of meaning are not the same. The German perspective specifies that eating done

¹² Abbreviations: 1 first person; 3 third person; E English; G German; p plural; PREP preposition; PRIOR earlier time; s singular; TP Tok Pisin; TRANS transitive. Also I would like to dedicate this paper to the memory of Otto Nekitel (1949-2001), to thank Bob Chandler, Jeff Siegel, Andrea Berez, Bob Blust, and Al Schütz for helpful comments, and to retain blame for any flaws.

by animals is covered by *fressen* and not *essen*, while the English perspective specified that eat covers both areas of meaning, eating done by humans and eating done by animals¹³. Now consider an English speaker learning Tok Pisin. While the verbs for eating cover much the same areas, one learns that TP **abus** covers the area of meaning of meat as food. But meat is infrequent in traditional Melanesian diets. Soon one learns that **abus** is not really the equivalent of meat, but is closer to enhancement, which would include coconut milk added to a meal of leaves and taro.

This paper presents evidence from Tok Pisin to highlight the Melanesian perspective. It turns out that the perspective within Tok Pisin is not static. Indeed, I will present evidence that the perspective within Tok Pisin is shifting. Tok Pisin is changing the areas of meaning to shapes that seem less exotic to English speakers. Interestingly, the change is to some extent unpredictable.

In this paper, first I review evidence for the earlier Melanesian perspective from several areas of the language:

5. the pronoun system
6. the meanings of some verbs
7. translations of *with*
8. some kinship terminology

Then I present evidence for changes. Finally, I suggest further investigations. Throughout, examples in **bold** are from Tok Pisin (TP).¹⁴

PRONOUN SYSTEM

The pronoun systems in all languages have the same overall function: sorting out who one is talking about. Comparing the Tok Pisin system to the English system reveals very different details. These details exemplify differences in what I am calling perspective.

In the singular, English sounds are applied to more general meanings:

TP	gloss
mi	I, me
yu	you
em	he, him, she, her, it

Differences are obvious: the subject/object case distinction and the gender distinctions are ignored.

In the plural, Tok Pisin specifies more than English. The sounds are from English words but the areas of meaning are Melanesian:

¹³ Similarly, in French *mouton* refers to both the animal and its meat; in English two words are used sheep and mutton, as pointed out by Saussure (1959:115-6) a century ago.

¹⁴ The data are largely based on my own knowledge of the language gained during a total of two years residence in Bougainville and on the Rai Coast. I also learned from Dutton (1973) and Mihalic (1971). For an excellent sample of well documented natural data, I refer the reader to Smith (2002).

TP	gloss
mipela	I and other(s), but not you
yumi(pela)	you and I (and possibly others)
yupela	you and other(s) with you
ol	they, them

The most salient difference is that E *we* is disambiguated to make explicit whether the person being spoken to is included or not. The form excluding the hearer is built from the singular **mi** and the apparent plural suffix **-pela**, which also occurs with adjectives. The inclusive form is built from **yu** and **mi** and **pela**. The form **yumi** is an implicit dual, which suffices for one speaker and one hearer; **yumipela** implies more people. The plural of **yu** is **yupela** marking the singular-plural distinction (*thou-you*) that is almost completely forgotten in English. **Ol** is an irregular plural, if one expects ***empela**.

Two more categories are common in the Pacific Languages and therefore in Tok Pisin but are not expressed in English: Dual and Trial

TP	gloss
mitupela	I and one other, but not you
yumi(tupela)	you and I (the two of us)
yutupela	the two of you
tupela	the two of them

TP	gloss
mitripela	I and two others
yumitripela	you, I and a third person
yutripela	the three of you
tripela	the three of them

The forms are quite regular. The adjective form of the numeral is suffixed. **Pela** regularly occurs at the end of adjectives:

TP	gloss
bikpela,	big
yelopela	yellow
wanpela	1
tupela	2
tripela	3
popela	4

Use of the dual and trial forms depends on the background of the speaker. One continues the habits of other languages one speaks. In other words, dual and trial forms are little used in areas where none of the local languages make the distinction.

MEANINGS OF SOME VERBS

Readers of Mülhäusler (1979; and Lincoln 1979) already know that many verbs in TP can have more inchoative meanings compared to similar sounding source words that have a more resultative meaning in English: Thus TP **painim** sounds like E *find him* but actually means look for. The word focuses attention

on the beginning of the process. The E *find* focuses attention on the conclusion of the process. English speaking learners of TP have made progress when they no longer hear **Mi bin painim, painim, painim, tasol nogat.** as I found and found and found, but it wasn't. In parallel fashion, the meaning of TP **dai** is not die but unconscious [perhaps starting to show signs of being dead]; **kilim** is not kill him but hit him, strike him [a blow that may well prove fatal]. These differences in areas of meanings again reflect the Melanesian perspective.

TRANSLATIONS FOR WITH

Perhaps the most striking conceptual contrast between English and Tok Pisin involves two grammatical meanings – instrumental [using] case and comitative [accompanying] case – that are covered by the single word *with* in E, but by two different grammatical structures in TP. The instrumental sense is covered by the preposition **long**:

Mi kat-im diwai long naip. I cut the wood with a knife.
1s cut-TRANS wood PREP knife

The comitative sense is covered by adverbial noun phrase **wantaim**:

Mi bin go wantaim Sir Paul. I went with Sir Paul.
1s PRIOR go accompany Sir Paul

The only prepositions in Tok Pisin are **long** and **bilong**. **Bilong** usually marks possession. **Long** marks everything else.

Mi bin go long Mosbi. I went to Port Moresby.
1s PRIOR go PREP Port Moresby

Em samting bilong ol. That is their business.
3s something PREP 3p

With such a limited choice, is no surprise that **long** marks instruments. The surprise is that it doesn't also mark comitative¹⁵.

WAN- IMPLIES SOLIDARITY

The logic of **wantaim** < one-time is that it means at the same time. If one accompanies another person, they both go at the same time. But structurally it is an adverbial noun, and not a preposition at all. **Wantaim** is part of a very productive pattern in Tok Pisin in which **wan** implies unity.

¹⁵ As Mihalic(1971: 123) points out: "**long**...This word is used in Melanesian Pidgin for nearly all the prepositions known in European languages including: in, on, at, to, from, with, by, about, because of, during, for"

Melanesia is socially very diverse, some 854 languages are spoken within Papua New Guinea. People in towns and cities come from many language areas. Chances are that a stranger will speak a different language -- indeed a very different language. Encountering someone who speaks the same language is likely a happy reunion. Thus **wantok** literally one-language means friend. There are numerous words in TP that built on this pattern of one-X implies sharing X implies a social bond or solidarity:

Wannem < one-name = namesake (an important bond in Melanesia)

Wanpisin < one-bird = clan mate, respecting the same totemic bird.

Wansopen < one-sauce pan = messmate, sharing the same cooking pot.

The pattern is so productive that I once got away with **Yumi wansu** to mean you and I have the same shoes and express solidarity with another barefoot party-goer who like me had left his footwear at the door. At first, he balked at my wording, but as I explained the intended solidarity he complimented me on my grasp of the language. In Mihalic's dictionary there is also **wanpis** < one-piece meaning orphan, alone. But I find the derivation reflecting isolation rather than sharing so in conflict with the Melanesian perspective that I suspect that it may have been coined by an outsider rather than a Melanesian.

SOME KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY

As with pronoun systems, all languages share the overall function of kinship terminology, which is to sort out who is related to whom. Here again, English sounds and Melanesian perspective lead to some strikingly different details. For example, when speaking of siblings: *E brother* refers to a male sibling and *E sister* refers to a female sibling. TP **brata** refers to siblings of the same sex, while **susa** refers to siblings of the opposite sex. In other words, **brata** means a woman's sister, a man's brother and **susa** means a woman's brother, a man's sister. Among men this difference in perspective is moot, but a woman saying **brata bilong mi** to introduce another woman, highlights the contrast.

The same sex vs. different sex perspective affects meanings in words referring to the parental generation: **papa** father includes all of one's father's brothers but not mother's brothers; **mama** mother includes all of one's mother's sisters but not father's sisters. The same sex vs. different sex perspective extends further, such that children of one's father's brother's and one's mother's sister's are treated like siblings. Thus **brata** includes parallel cousins of the same sex, i.e. the children are the same sex, and they are children of siblings of the same sex. These extensions can go on and on, so that for example the grandchildren of **brata**, parallel second cousins are treated as siblings.

Nuclear family status of actual siblings can be asserted with the terms **wanmama** same mother and **wanpapa**, same father.

Mitupela wanpapa na wanmama.

We two are true siblings, same mother, same father.

NEW WAYS

The description above is the TP that I found some thirty years ago when I first lived in Papua New Guinea. On brief visits starting in 2000, I am finding that the language is changing. Some of the data

mentioned to support the idea of Melanesian perspective is no longer current, particularly in the sibling terminology and the translations of *with*.

SIBLINGS

In mid 2003 during a party thrown by East West Center students, I explained at some length TP kin terms to a young acquaintance. She had recently visited her mother's village in Papua New Guinea, but before that visit had heard little if any Tok Pisin. As she began to catch on to kinship system I was describing, we were joined by Kenneth Sumbuk with better credentials than mine for this tutorial. He grew up speaking TP and has graduate degrees in linguistics from Oxford (UK) and Waikato (NZ). He very gently let me know that younger people no longer use the same vs. different sex pattern for sibling terms. For them **brata** means male sibling and **susa** means female sibling, while older people cling to earlier usage.

Later that year on a visit to Bougainville, I was to some extent able to confirm this change. During my stay, a brother and sister were expected for a visit home after living in Manus for more than a decade. When speaking of them, I used the woman's name and **wantaim brata blongen**. My deliberate "mistake" went uncommented upon. I had hoped to be corrected to **wantaim susa blongen**.

Presumably, the change in TP meaning from sibling of same sex to male sibling and from sibling of the opposite sex to female sibling is due somehow to knowledge of the English meanings. In my review of the Lonely Planet *Pidgin Phrase Book* (Lincoln 2001) I criticized the glossing of **brata** as brother and **susa** as sister. My critique was based on my earlier experience. Those remarks are themselves now open to criticism and revision. Interesting questions remain: Does the kinship system as whole retain the older Melanesian perspective? Does the extension of sibling terms to cousins persist?

TRANSLATING WITH

On a trip in 2000, I found that some of my friends were using the comitative case to express the instrumental case, both in TP and in their village language: **Katim wantaim naip** cut with [accompanying] a knife rather than **katim long naip** cut with [using] a knife. They were making the same "mistake" in their language Banoni: *kotsi mea naipi* cut (greens) with [accompanying] a knife rather than the older "correct" Banoni: *kotsi ghenai naipi* cut (greens) with [using] a knife (Lincoln 2002).

Another example was available on a web page credited to Edward Etepa at Unitech in Lae, Papua New Guinea, that featured a picture of a woman putting on traditional face paint. Just below the picture is the caption: "**Meri hilans i karamapim het wantaim bilas. Meri i redi long kalapkalap long haus singsing** Women from the highlands cover their heads with decorations."¹⁶ This change is puzzling.

¹⁶ Unfortunately, the URL for the web page with this interesting picture and caption is no longer valid. The caption may be analysed as follows:

Meri	hilans	i	karamap-im	het	wantaim	bilas.	
woman	Highlands	3s	cover	-TRANS	head	ACCOMPANY	decoration
Meri	i	redi	long	kalapkalap	long	haus	singsing
woman	3s	ready	PREP	dance	PREP	house	feast

The woman has put decoration on her head. She is ready to dance in the feast house.

Convergence toward English only explains the fact that the two translations are simplified to one. Why change to the inherently Melanesian structure, **wantaim**? Why not extend **long** to cover both meanings of *with*?

My brief comments on these changes are intended as a challenge to others to revise and extend my observations. I look forward to reading other reports on these changes.

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THE NEED FOR A BETTER EDUCATION IN INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES: A Case for Alekano

Lawrence K. Gerry
University of Goroka
gerryl@uog.ac.pg

ABSTRACT

Children are the leaders in the maintenance and heritage of our dying languages and knowledge. As such, there is a great need to advocate the use of our local languages and knowledge for the benefit of this and future generations. This paper is based on unstructured interviews conducted with some Alekano speakers through open discussions, and on speeches made by some government officials and political figures in organized vernacular language awareness programs. The data was collected and analyzed using tape recorders, pen and papers. The information was then typed into a personal computer which was later analyzed. From the responses received, there is a great need to maintain and preserve the local vernaculars, knowledge and cultures of our nation, beginning at the elementary education level which the national language policy partly supports this trend. However, there are also impediments such as recruiting of elementary teachers and trainers who are not well-versed in the local language and knowledge which hamper the learning of children. Besides, primary school teachers are not posted to their local schools to effectively facilitate the language bridging process. Hence, these issues should be seriously addressed for the betterment of vernacular education in our education system.

KEYWORDS: vernacular education, elementary education, language policy, home-teaching, tok ples, Tok Pisin.

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INTRODUCTION

Papua New Guinea is well known in the world for its wealth of languages spoken. This linguistic diversity makes it really problematic for a specific language to be used as a medium of instruction in our education system. As such, the need for a better indigenous education should become the prime concern for the Papua New Guinea (PNG) Government and its local communities.

This paper is based on an ongoing awareness program conducted amongst the Alekano (Gahuku) language group in the Goroka District of Eastern Highlands Province. This awareness program was organized to mark the International Year of Indigenous Languages. The processes involved in collecting information included unstructured interviews, open discussions, and analysis of speeches made by guest speakers.

This awareness campaign, conducted in a number of villages with the assistance of native Alekano speakers, revealed the significance of valuing the indigenous language, culture, knowledge and identity. The Government of PNG legislated that “every person has the right to become literate in the language he or she knows best” (NDOE, 2001:1).

The findings of this awareness campaign show that there is a great need to uphold, maintain and preserve our local languages and cultures. The Alekano wanted their children to be educated to a certain level, using their local language and knowledge, together with the English language. They believe that teaching in the vernacular prior to commencing primary school will enable the children to learn their local language and cultures well which will then assist them to learn a foreign language and its cultures.

Some key questions which guide this discussion include:

- 1) What are the associated problems of vernacular education at elementary level?
- 2) Are there any strategies that can be used to tackle these issues?
- 3) Who are responsible for the betterment of our children’s education?

DISCUSSION

Vernacular and Bilingual Education in Perspective

Before the education reform, PNG children learned in a foreign language from their first day in school. “A vast majority of the children sit in their classrooms not knowing what is going on, nor what the teacher is saying, but it is their everyday classroom experiences and they come to accept it as such” (Yamuna, 2000:63). However, the endorsement of the National Language Policy in 1989 by the National Government formalized the trend towards acknowledging the importance of vernacular education and, to some extent, recognized the role of associated literacy activities. The reformed education system and curriculum are based on the assumption that education should start in a language children already speak, with subsequent gradual shift in focus towards children’s use of English (NDOE, 1992).

The concepts of vernacular and bilingual education in Papua New Guinea overlap. That is, learning begins with the language that the learners are familiar with at the elementary level, with gradual bridging to English. Education at this level aims to “assist children to relate better to their own environment, appreciate their own cultural values, and make them more psychologically secure” (Somare, 1974:13). It also aims to “ease children's transition from home into a Western-inspired education system” (Delpit and Kemelfield, 1985:9). The success of this policy is evident in an SDA-run literacy school in the Masi village on the outskirts of Goroka Town. After going through the literacy classes, some formerly illiterate local villagers are now able to read and write in Alekano language, Tok Pisin, and basic English. One of

the pioneer students of the school is now a church worker at the local SDA church and he is also a successful businessman at the Masi village because he could read and write in Alekano, Tok Pisin and simple English.

Before children transit from a local vernacular to a foreign language, they need to be well-versed in their vernacular. Thus, the concept of vernacular education at elementary level as introduced by the National Department of Education (NDOE) is supported by the Ministerial Policy Statement No.3/99 approved by the then Minister for Research, Science and Technology, Professor John Waiko. The policy outlined a program of bilingual education which specified that:

At the elementary school level, (preparatory to elementary 2), this means that the language of instruction is completely in the children's vernacular language, or the community lingua franca, with an introduction in oral English at the end of elementary 2. Children will leave elementary school literate in their first language...

In practice, the community must be informed in order to make the decision on what language should be used at elementary level. The language chosen should be the language that is shared in the community, and used for most communication in that community (NDOE, n.d).

This policy partly allows for the need to value and preserve the local language which most of the local educated Alekano speakers agreed with. One of the locals specifically pointed out that with this policy, our local schools are now able to incorporate the local language and culture with either Tok Pisin or English which makes learning easy and appropriate for our children.

Problems with the use of Vernacular in Elementary Education

A good number of Alekano speakers expressed that there is a need for the Government of PNG to establish a practical policy that would clearly emphasize the use of indigenous languages as a means of instruction in schools. One of the locals indicated that there is no restriction in the use of languages in all the schools within the Alekano community. The local elementary schools are using either Tok Pisin or English when they are supposed to use Alekano language to begin their schooling.

Another local asserted that there are two main reasons that hamper vernacular education at the elementary level in PNG. They are rural–urban migration and intermarriage. These two factors contribute to changes in language use and language choice in the urban schools. Because of the need to communicate with speakers of other languages, people are forced to use Tok Pisin and English as languages of choice in urban schools (Mase, 1999).

The Alekano speakers interviewed stressed that, although they try their best to teach their children to speak the local language, their children continue resorting to Tok Pisin. This is a clear indication of serious competition between Tok Pisin and the vernaculars in many rural areas, which makes it hard for children to master their tok ples language. Often, Tok Pisin is used in place of the vernacular in cases where no vernacular alphabet is available (Litteral, 2004).

Another detrimental factor that affects the learning of vernaculars in elementary schools is the availability of trained teachers. As indicated by Alekano speakers, some elementary teachers are either not native speakers or they are too young to be well versed in the local vernacular and the local knowledge. Some of them are employed through the formal appointment process and others are employed through nepotism or bribery. However, the initial understanding, it is believed, was to get volunteers to teach vernacular education organized by non-government organizations. Therefore, these elementary teachers do not teach well in the local language which contributes to the falling standards of vernacular education in the communities. In addition, some elementary trainers are not locals and yet they are training the local elementary teachers; this adds to the downfall of vernacular education in elementary schools.

One other concern noted is the process of language bridging from elementary two to lower primary grade three. It was highlighted by a guest speaker at one of the awareness programs that teachers are usually blamed for the difficulties faced by students in learning tok ples and bridging to English. However, NDOE and provincial education divisions should also share the blame, because of the existing appointment process. Primary teachers should be permanently placed at their local schools; they should be responsible for lower grades to ensure that the language bridging process is effectively facilitated after children transit from elementary level. These teachers can ensure that children use their local vernacular in their learning, thus fulfilling the expectations of NDOE.

Strategies for Better Indigenous Language Education

As noticed in the preceding discussion, tok ples is being threatened by the growing use of Tok Pisin. Therefore, the PNG Government should re-examine the language policy in PNG, focusing on specific procedures that guide teaching and learning in vernacular, Tok Pisin and English. If there is no specific policy for each of these languages to be used at elementary level, then something needs to be done to formulate such policy. Otherwise, the urban elementary schools will continue to use Tok Pisin whilst the rural elementary schools will remain at the crossroads, conflicted about whether to use local vernaculars or Tok Pisin.

Matane's Report (1986) further stressed that in elementary education, communication skills are first learned in the mother tongue and are later transferred to English. It also stated that bilingual students perform better in English. In schools where the students speak a variety of languages, the early instruction should be in the major language of the region or in Tok Pisin. Litteral (2004) argues that the formal education elementary level should use the language of the community as the language of instruction. This is generally the vernacular in rural areas, but a lingua franca (Tok Pisin) in urban areas.

Looking at what Matane and Litteral stated, the current language policy needs to have sub-sections that offer specific guidance for the use of the language of instruction (tok ples, Tok Pisin and English). These guidelines will assist teachers in determining which language(s) should be used at their elementary schools, in both rural and urban schools.

Another alternative that should be examined is 'home-teaching'. As correctly pointed out by some Alekano speakers, parents and other community members should always communicate with their children in their local vernacular after school. This is a positive approach that will encourage children to improve their linguistic competency and proficiency in their local language. Furthermore, this would promote children's learning of local cultures and traditional knowledge. Stringer and Faraclas (1987:7) contend that

when children learn to read and write in their own local language it helps them to be proud of their language and their culture ... when people learn to read and write in a way that is made as easy and enjoyable for them as possible, they go on to read and write with ease and pleasure for the rest of their lives.

Vernacular education at the elementary stage has many benefits. Ada (1986) claimed that encouraging the maintenance and development of tok ples languages will reinforce people's sense of cultural identity. Furthermore, the maintenance of the local language strengthens family and community ties. Local language maintenance also enhances communication between generations. When students forget the language of their families and communities, they may lose access to their local heritage. To enhance vernacular education, elementary schools need financial assistance and community support. They need to have adequate educational materials and equipment, such as dictionaries, syllabi, textbooks, reading materials, and so forth, in the local languages.

In the case of Alekano speakers, the local Member for Goroka, Mr Thompson Harukaveque, pledged to financially assist the reviving and preserving of the Alekano language. The Alekano speakers are also fortunate to have 'Alekano Dictionary' compiled by Ellis W. Deibler (Wanimapi), which was published

by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) in 2008. Without such assistance and input, indigenous languages cannot be successfully taught at elementary level. That is why the Alekano speakers are responding well to the advancement of vernacular education, while at the same time highlighting the problems that are associated with it.

CONCLUSION

The linguistic and cultural differences in PNG make it really problematic for a specific language to be used as a medium of instruction in our education system. As a consequence, the PNG Government has shown some initiative in addressing this issue through the establishment of vernacular and bilingual education system. This has had some success so far. However, the National Language Policy is too broad to capture the essence of utilizing tok ples, Tok Pisin or English at the appropriate grade levels in PNG's school system. As such, adjustments need to be made to expand on the use of tok ples and Tok Pisin in our rural and urban elementary schools. The Alekano speakers interviewed in this study expressed the desire that the Government, through NDOE, should re-examine the current language policy and create supplementary policies to meet the expectations of learners and their communities in both the urban and rural settings.

The recruitment of elementary teachers and trainers is also a point of concern. Some of the teachers are not well versed in the local vernacular and yet they are recruited. This contributes to the current stagnation of vernacular education. Elementary and primary teachers are often blamed for not teaching the students according to expectations; however, NDOE and provincial education divisions should share the blame, because of their appointment process. This is to ensure that children are not faced with difficulties in mastering the indigenous languages when they either excel in the education hierarchy or leave school and go back to their respective communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the aforesaid, the following recommendations are suggested:

- The National Government, through NDOE, should re-examine the National Language Policy governing our school system. They should provide supplementary language policies that specify the use of tok ples and Tok Pisin.
- Papua New Guineans should encourage home-teaching by encouraging children to use tok ples in their daily communication.
- Community members and teachers of elementary schools should strongly encourage the use of tok ples on school premises, as well as after school.

- The appointing authorities should select elementary teachers who are qualified and well versed in the local language and knowledge, so that they can teach the students both effectively and efficiently.
- Elementary trainers should come from the local linguistic group, so that they can deliver better to the elementary teachers who will then teach the students in their local vernacular.
- Members of the community, business leaders, local MPs and others should constantly support the local elementary and literacy schools in cash and kind, to assist them in facilitating and promoting vernacular education.
- Teachers should be qualified to teach children in their indigenous language, and then help them bridge to English. They should continue to encourage the use of vernacular throughout the children's education as recommended by NDOE through the Ministerial Policy Statement No.3/99.
- NDOE and provincial education divisions should appoint primary teachers who would be permanently placed at their local schools, so that they will be able to effectively facilitate the language bridging process after the children transit from the elementary level.

Once these and other related issues are addressed by the PNG Government, a better education in indigenous languages will become a reality.

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THE SOLOMON ISLANDS INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT & ENHANCE THE USE OF VERNACULARS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Ali Glasgow¹ (Victoria University), Bernadine Ha'amori (Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development), Joanna Daiwo & Viola Masala (Solomon Islands College of Higher Education)

¹ Correspondent Author: ali.glasgow@vuw.ac.nz

ABSTRACT

The Solomon Islands early childhood education sector has recently developed an early childhood education curriculum. A critical issue is the place of vernacular language in the early childhood programme. The new curriculum is a significant factor in providing meaningful, culturally relevant and inclusive programmes. Vernacular languages connect education to the community and can strengthen community involvement. This discussion explores the role of community in early childhood education, particularly in terms of preserving and enhancing the use of both Solomon Islands Pijin and the many vernacular dialects of the Solomon Islands. Issues and challenges are discussed and measures to encourage the use of pidgin and dialects are explored.

Key words: vernacular education, vernacular curriculum development, Solomon Islands Pijin, indigenous language preservation, dialects, community involvement

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been increased awareness of the need to preserve and promote the vernacular languages in the Solomon Islands. In order to achieve this goal, it is important to develop early childhood vernacular education programmes, because early childhood is an optimum time for language acquisition and development. The Solomon Islands National Early Childhood Education policy statement, clause 1.12 Language of Instruction, issued by the Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (2008) states that the language of instruction used in the early childhood centre shall be the local language or the vernacular spoken by the community where the centre is situated or Pidgin (in case the community is multilingual). In line with the National Policy for Basic education (clause 1.12.2) the English language should be gradually introduced to all children at the age of 5, in preparation for transition to Primary Education. These standards give clear directives to guide both the curriculum development panel in developing the early childhood curriculum and early childhood teachers in their practice.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Solomon Islands became a British Protectorate in 1893 and finally attained political independence from Great Britain on 7 July 1978. The Solomon Islands are a double chain of islands between 5 degrees and 12 degrees S. latitude and 155 degrees and 170 degrees E longitude. The total land area is 11,200 square miles.

The population of the Solomon Islands in July 2011 was 571,890. The growth rate is 22.21% and those aged birth to fourteen comprise 37.8% of the population. 19% of the population live in urban areas. The majority of Solomon Islanders are Melanesian, the next largest group are Polynesians who have settled on islands and atolls such as Rennell and Bellona, Tikopia and Anuta, as well as Sikaiana and Ontong Java. There is also a Kiribati Micronesian community who were resettled there by the British Government because of population pressures in the 1950's and 60's.

The arrival of Christianity in the Solomon Islands had a considerable effect on language usage there, with the Church selecting a small number of local vernacular languages to be used in the range of various denominations represented. This was met with a mixed response from the Solomon Islands community (Tryon & Hackman, 1983).

EVANGELISM, LANGUAGE & EDUCATION

The languages spoken in Solomon Islands schools became inextricably tied up with the history of evangelism. Evangelism and education were synonymous in the Solomon Islands until as recently as 1974. Up until 1945, churches were the sole educational agencies. Since 1945, the government has taken a more active role in education, finally taking over full responsibility in 1974. The church languages were thus the language of the classroom. The Mota language was chosen by the Church of Melanesia; the Methodist mission adopted Roviana as the mission lingua franca; the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) mission emphasised English as well as Marovo as the mission language, while the South Seas Evangelical Mission chose to use Pidgin. This mission concentrated its efforts on Malaita, since the majority of cane field workers recruited to work in the Queensland cane fields came from this region. This latter group had been introduced to Pidgin in Queensland, where the South Seas Evangelical Mission originated.

Further developments in the selection of the official language of instruction saw Mota retaining a dominant position in the Church of Melanesia for more than seventy years. English was also considered an important language of instruction in the central schools in the diocese. The Methodists and SDA's used both Roviana and Marovo, respectively, as the language of instruction, with an emphasis, however, on using English. The Roman Catholics used Ghari, whose prominence prevailed until the late 1950's.

Hau'ofa (1993) argues that the effects of colonial rule on the thinking and attitudes of the Pacific peoples are still very strong. Since Western practices have generally been considered as more desirable, English has dominated education in the Solomon Islands, at a huge cost to local languages and cultures. This is a legacy of colonialism.

In 1983, Tryon and Hackman reported that vernacular languages were strong locally and predicted that they were likely to remain so in a society where traditional values were so highly prized. It was the Solomon Islands desire that vernacular languages remain strong in spite of the significant expansion of Pidgin and English in recent times. Tryon and Hackman carried out some preliminary work on the classification of all of the languages spoken on the Solomon Islands archipelago. They found that there are sixty three distinct languages indigenous to the Solomon Islands, as well as many dialects. There are two language families – Austronesian and Papuan. There are seven Papuan languages, and the remaining fifty six are Austronesian. Five languages are Polynesian and fifty one are Melanesian Austronesian. Recent statistical data reveal 120 Indigenous languages in the Solomon Islands archipelago. This paper suggests measures that can (and should) be taken to protect vernacular languages through promoting their use in early childhood education.

DISCUSSION

Within the early childhood education sector in Pacific Nations, there is an increasing aspiration to use vernacular language instruction in the early childhood setting. The development of the Maori and Pacific language nest movement in the 1980's was in response to community concerns that Maori and Pacific languages were becoming endangered (Mara, 1998). Such initiatives have worked to successfully promote cultural and linguistic maintenance.

To counter the tide of language loss, Taufe'ulungake (1994) calls for Pacific communities to mobilise and to actively seek measures to enhance language maintenance. Language and culture are inextricably linked. Language constitutes the vehicle by which essential cultural and cosmological idioms are transmitted. Destroying a people's language is tantamount to destroying their culture and undermining the ability of that nation to sustain itself (Kunie, 1995, in Semali & Kincheloe, 1999). To stem the increasing and inevitable use of English as lingua franca, children need to see their vernacular as a functioning language. They have a strong grounding in their first (home or vernacular) language, and they see and hear their language being used competently for a range of functions.

Educational programmes that devalue the indigenous language in favour of English or Pidgin perpetuate the notion that vernacular is limited and of little value. Kincheloe (2004) draws our attention to the

political nature of education systems which support the needs of the dominant culture, thus subverting the interests of marginalised groups. The devaluing of Indigenous language and culture deprives the community not only of linguistic and cultural knowledge, but also of a sense of identity and belonging to a cultural community. Bourdieu (in Corson, 1993) argues that different language situations usually make one language more prestigious than another. The majority language is often perceived as more elegant and important, opening the door to educational and economic success. Mathews (2000) refers to this as the 'totemisation' of English which leads to the stigmatisation of 'dominated' languages and influencing language maintenance, language restoration, language shift or perpetuate language death in a society (Fishman, 1989). Furthermore, this perpetuates economic inequalities, and oppresses minority languages (Baker, 2006).

Language can be the 'glue' which ensures collective cultural identity. Fittingly, Boas in Agar(1994) coined the phrase 'languaculture' to describe the inextricable link between language and culture. Fishman (1989) refers to the notions of linguistic determinism which describes the connection between language and culture whereby one grows up with a language and that language shapes the way one sees the world, determines one's worldview and identity. Sapir and Whorf in Fishman (1989) note that culture is semantically encoded in language, and culture and context are expressed through the actual use of the language. Language is more than an expression of world view; it is a guide to social reality (Baker, 2006).

Education has the power to promote and disseminate certain ideas about language; it can enforce its linguistic demands by excluding dissenters, by rewarding conformity, by pillorying deviation, and by sanctioning the 'legitimate' (Gramsci; in Corson, 1993). On the other hand, educational programmes which are embedded in indigenous language immersion in the early years assist long term language maintenance (Siraj-Blatchford, 2000). This is further supported by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 30, which states that a child who is indigenous shall not be denied the right to enjoy his or her own culture or to use his or her own language (Ah Nee- Benham & Cooper, 2000).

This discussion is supported by a sociocultural theoretical framework. Language is viewed as the vehicle in which essential culture and cosmological idioms are transmitted. Removing a people's language is tantamount to destroying their culture and consequently undermining the ability of a nation to sustain itself (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999, p.18). Early childhood is a critical stage for language acquisition. Language acquisition is a complex process which includes engaging with phonology (the sounds of words), vocabulary (the words of the language), grammar (the way the words are ordered and put together), discourse (the way the sentences are put together) and pragmatics (the rules of how to use the language (Baker, 2006). Viewed holistically, this process involves children learning the traditions,

customs and practices surrounding language use. Whilst research has found that the status of vernaculars in the Solomon Islands is stable, the use of Pidgin and English continues to rise. Correspondingly, all cultural and social practices are modified. Sociolinguists have established a causal link between vernacular language loss and the acquisition of Western social and cultural practices (Baker, 2006).

SOLOMON ISLANDS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SECTOR

In 2009, the Ministry of Education and Human Relations Development (MEHRD) began to develop the early childhood curriculum. Within the last decade, education in the wider Pacific region has witnessed an unmistakable trend towards taking ownership of Pacific education. The Solomon Islands initiative stems from the desire to develop an early childhood curriculum that would embrace and reflect the culture, customs and traditional practices of the Solomon Islands. Significantly, the use vernacular languages in the early childhood curriculum and programme were highlighted.

Early childhood education in the Solomon Islands covers the ages of three to five years. Originally, the first early childhood settings were initiated by individuals, groups and voluntary organisations in urban settings, such as Honiara, Gizo and Auki. The Honiara preschool association was established in 1981. In 1998, the first ECE students began training at the Solomon Islands College for Higher Education (SICHE) for the certificate in Teaching ECE. Today, SICHE continues to train early childhood teachers as well as providing on-going professional development for practitioners in the field.

Imparting Solomon Islands cultural values to children in the early formative years is imperative to the Solomon Islands community. The provision of an early childhood programme which values cultural traditions and languages is a central aim of the Solomon Islands curriculum, based on the assumption of equitable access to quality play-based programmes in the Solomon Islands. A quality, culturally relevant programme incorporates learning opportunities and weaves the vernacular into its rich and stimulating play-based programmes.

The early childhood curriculum panel began developing the draft document *Valium Smol Pikinini blong iumi* (Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2009.) They were cognisant of the challenges they faced in developing a curriculum that addressed the complex issues around language use, language acquisition in the early years, language maintenance of vernacular language, and use of Pidgin and English in the Solomon Islands.

Pidgin is the lingua franca in the Solomon Islands, particularly in the urban settings of Honiara, Auki and Gizo. Most people there are at least bilingual (in Pidgin and their village vernacular). Lichtenberg's 2006

study found the Toqabaqita people, were bilingual in their vernacular language as well as Pidgin. The study found that although code switching was common, it is Toqabaqita which is their first language, the language of everyday life, and the language that children acquire as their first language. The study concluded that the language is not under threat in the foreseeable future. Whilst this may be indicative of what is occurring in the provinces, the demographics of the urban centres reflects a growing use of both English and Pidgin which threatens the status of vernaculars as first language. Bearing this in mind, the early childhood education development panel determined that policies and procedures, developed in accordance with curriculum directives, would assist in vernacular language maintenance.

The National Early Childhood Policy Statement (MEHRD, 2008) directive is to use the vernacular in the early childhood setting. With this guideline, the Solomon Islands early childhood education curriculum development panel developed the principle of Language. The vernacular languages of the Solomon Islands are recognised as official languages of instruction, to be used at all times in early childhood education, particularly in rural /village settings. It is acknowledged, however, that a bi-lingual approach may be required in urban areas where speakers may not have the knowledge of the vernacular and may need to communicate in either Pidgin or English. In the early years, children communicate using a range of non-verbal communication, such as body language, gestures. Cultural and traditional ways of communicating, such as music and dance, are also acknowledged. Modern communication technology is embraced as a tool to assist children's language development, particularly in early childhood.

Valium Smol Pikinini blong iumi (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2009) emphasises developing strong identity as well as a strong sense of belonging to the culture and nation. The communication strand (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development 2009) states that language is a vital part of communication. In early childhood, one of the major cultural tasks for children is to develop competence in their language. Languages do not consist only of words, sentences, and stories: language includes the language of images, art, dance, mathematics, movement, rhythm, and music (Ministry of Education and human Resources Development, 2009, 24).

EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES & STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

The early childhood education draft curriculum (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2009) encompasses a holistic view of language development in the early years. The strand of communication recognises that the languages and symbols of the Solomon Islands need to be protected and promoted. During the early years of their development, children learn to communicate their experiences and to interpret the ways in which others communicate and represent experiences. During this

period, they develop competence in symbolic, abstract, imaginative, and creative thinking. Language grows and develops in meaningful contexts, when children have a need to know and a reason to communicate.

The role of the adult in supporting children's developing language skills is pivotal. The curriculum requires teachers and other adults to respect and encourage the child's home language. It also states that policies should be in place to support children's education in the vernacular language (as well as in Pidgin and English in the urban areas, such as Honiara). In villages, it requires teachers and other adults working with children in the early childhood setting to be fluent in the vernacular and to use the vernacular language whenever possible.

Early childhood programmes will enable children to learn the skills valued in the Solomon Islands culture, such as oral traditions involving listening, memorizing, observation and story-telling. Much of this can be conveyed using vernacular languages. Furthermore, creative arts will incorporate cultural traditions and symbolism.

An environment, which is rich in signs, symbols, words, numbers songs, literature, poetry, as well as traditional and cultural art and artefacts, is an effective platform to promote and privilege vernacular language acquisition. Interpersonal relationships, conversations and one-to-one interactions between the adult and the child hold enormous possibilities for language development.

Teaching strategies that enable children to develop vernacular language include:

- Teachers using the vernacular of the village first and foremost in the programmes
- Teachers and other adults in the early childhood setting using phrases from children's home language as well as the local vernacular most of the time when engaging in conversations with them
- Providing many opportunities for children to hear stories, poems, chants and songs, particularly those with a strong connection to the Solomon Islands culture.
- Providing oral storytelling each day, particularly the traditional folklore, delivered in the local vernacular.
- Adopting a village approach in the early childhood setting whereby others in the community are invited to participate in the programme and to impart their knowledge of customs, traditional knowledge and vernacular language skills.
- Ensuring that children become familiar with the stories and literature valued by the Solomon Islands cultural groups.

Further measures to support and enhance vernacular languages might include a provision that prospective student teachers accepted to a teachers training programme must be fluent in the vernacular of the village where they intend to teach. Such measures not only serve to strengthen vernacular language content and

use in the early childhood setting, but also demonstrate the strong desire by the Solomon Islands community to retain, protect and promote their unique and highly valued vernacular languages.

CONCLUSION

The discourse on language maintenance and preservation, whilst not a new issue, is complex and contentious. This discussion focused on the Solomon Islands early childhood education sector. It has discussed the issues of language implementation, language loss, language maintenance, and language survival. It argues that the early years are the optimum period for children to acquire not only a strong language base, but also a well-established sense of cultural identity and belonging. The pivotal role of education is promoted as well as practices outlined in the Solomon Islands early childhood curriculum (draft), which suggests realistic measures for the protection and promotion of vernacular languages in early childhood education.

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**DECREOLIZATION OF TOK PISIN:
Is there a Tok Pisin - to - English Continuum?**

Kilala Devette-Chee

Linguistics & Modern Languages
University of Papua New Guinea
kilala_chee@yahoo.com.au

ABSTRACT

This paper reports on the current status of Tok Pisin as it enters its decreolization stage in urban centres like Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea (PNG). The paper argues that, although Tok Pisin is now decreolizing (Romaine, 1992:31) in Port Moresby as a result of its extensive exposure to English, thus resulting in an anglicized Tok Pisin, it is still not readily intelligible to English speakers, while becoming unintelligible to Rural Pidgin speakers. Extracts, collected over a period of five years from various Papua New Guinean musicians living in Port Moresby, and other urban centres in PNG, are used to support this claim. The paper concludes that, despite the heavily anglicized Tok Pisin observed in the lyrics of the songs used in this study, thus resulting in a Tok-Pisin-English Continuum, the influence of English upon Tok Pisin does not make the latter more like English but rather results in what the author, in support of Wurm (1979:240), sees as a 'third system'.

Key Words: creole, pidgin, decreolization, anglicize, continuum, lingua franca, Melanesian Pidgins, lexifier, superstrate, substratum, borrowing, code-switching, monolectal, sociolectal

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INTRODUCTION

Tok Pisin, the English-based pidgin spoken in Papua New Guinea, has been the country's very important lingua franca since developing from a stabilized pidgin in the 1860s onwards (Smith, 2002:13).

Mühlhausler (2003:1), describes Tok Pisin as a language that is used in Papua New Guinea for a wide range of public and private functions; it is spoken across a population of 6, 187, 591 (CIA Fact Book, 2011). At the moment, Tok Pisin has an official status, alongside English and Hiri Motu, (an indigenous pidgin). However, Tok Pisin is the only national language spoken by the overwhelming majority of Papua New Guineans, in both rural and urban areas (Nekitel, 1998:50). This sets it apart from both Hiri Motu and English (the latter is spoken by a small fraction of Papua New Guinea population, mostly the educated elite and the expatriate community). Like other Melanesian pidgins (Vanuatu Bislama and Solomon Islands Pijin), Tok Pisin is widely used in everyday life, on radio and television, in Government agencies and in the Parliament; it also plays a significant role in spreading the Christian message (Tyron & Charpentier, 2004:10). According to Tyron and Charpentier (2004), what makes Tok Pisin different from

other pidgins is that it has an accepted written form, based on the Tok Pisin dictionary of Father Mihalic first published in 1957. Tok Pisin also has Austronesian language features which make its system distinct from those of English and Atlantic creoles on all linguistic levels (Holm, 2000:100). Romaine (1992:54) contends that Tok Pisin, after over a hundred years of development into a stable and expanded creole, is now beginning to decreolize.

DECREOLIZATION

According to Richards, Platt and Webber (1985:73), decreolization is the process by which a creole becomes more like the standard language from which most of its vocabulary comes. Below are some current views on decreolization;

Hall (1966) contends that renewed contact between a creole and its original lexifier language is likely to lead to a process of ‘decreolization’. According to his model, this happens whenever a creole language is in direct contact with its associated superstrate language. Smith (2002:209) also believes that instead of the replacement of superstrate features with substrate patterns, the superstrate patterns are gradually re-imposed and the creole features are lost. Holm (2000:10) postulates that decreolization can result in a continuum of forms varying from those furthest from the superstrate (the basilect) to those closest to it (the acrolect), with mesolectal or intermediate varieties in between.

It cannot be denied that Tok Pisin in its current state seems to fit these descriptions. Increasingly, more and more words have been adopted and the phonology has been assimilated as well, which has created a much more anglicized variety of Tok Pisin. Examples of this are found in the section titled ‘Urban Tok Pisin; the Case of Port Moresby’ in this paper.

VARIETIES OF TOK PISIN

Tok Pisin is widely believed to have four main varieties. According to Mühlhausler (1979: 140-54), there are three major sociolects of Tok Pisin: 1) Rural Tok Pisin, spoken by the majority of Papua New Guineans living outside urban centres; 2) Bush Tok Pisin, spoken in areas where Tok Pisin has been newly introduced, mainly in the Highlands 3) Urban Tok Pisin, spoken in the major towns since the late 1960s and 4) a fourth variety which Mühlhausler calls, ‘Tok Masta,’ the unsystematic variety of ‘foreigner talk’ by expatriates.

What that has not been documented widely, except for Smith (2002: 57-57), is the nature of the four regional varieties of Tok Pisin, namely: 1) NGI (New Guinea Islands) Tok Pisin, spoken in the New Guinea Islands of New Britain, New Ireland, Manus, and Bougainville; 2) MOMASE Tok Pisin, spoken

in the New Guinea mainland and coastal areas namely: Madang, Morobe and The Sepik Provinces; 3) Papuan Tok Pisin, spoken in the Southern Region and 4) Highlands Tok Pisin, spoken in the five Highlands provinces of Eastern Highlands; Simbu, Enga, Western Highlands and Southern Highlands. The sentences below illustrate these regional differences.

The utterance (a) below was overheard during a quarrel at a market between a husband and wife from the MOMASE region in 2008, where the husband was issuing a threat to his wife. Samples (b), (c) and (d) are likely versions of the same threat if it was spoken by speakers from the Highlands, NGI or Southern Regions respectively:

Example 1

Yu	bai	dai	kirap	long	haus
<i>You</i>	<i>will</i>	<i>die (unconscious)</i>	<i>and get up again</i>	<i>at</i>	<i>the house</i>

- a) MOMASE Yu bai dai kirap long haus
- b) Highlands Yu bai indai kirap long haus
- c) NGI Bai yu dai na kirap long haus
- d) Papuan Yu bai dai na kirap lon haus

Note that the sentences in Examples 1 (a) – (d) are generally regional dialects which are heavily influenced by their L1, thus resulting in these differences. Wurm (1979:238) states that substratum influences on Tok Pisin are minimal and that it is often difficult to detect a speaker's regional origin. As a native speaker of Tok Pisin, the author refutes this statement because L1 and L2 speakers of Tok Pisin easily distinguish between speakers from the four different regions as illustrated in Example 1. Smith (2002:56-57), also points out that many Tok Pisin speakers claim they are able to recognize regional varieties, mainly on phonological grounds. He explains that in the three regions which he studied, (Highlands, MOMASE and Islands, (hence NGI), the phoneme inventory is basically similar with some new phonemes from English occurring in loan words, but with very little evidence that they are used contrastively with established phonemes. Smith found that the prenasalisation of stops is often viewed to be characteristic of the Highlands, although he found a few cases of prenasalised stops also in the MOMASE and Islands regions. He also found that the alternation of /t/ and /s/ is common in the Islands (and as far as the author knows, this is also found among some MOMASE speakers), whereas the alternation of the /l/ and /r/ is common in the Highlands.

Another dimension of dialectal complexity of Tok Pisin is the rural vs. urban variation in each of these

regions (which the author does not have examples of). However, from her own observations as a native speaker of Tolai (Kuanua), Tok Pisin spoken in rural East New Britain is becoming less intelligible with Tok Pisin spoken in the urban centres. A typical example of a sentence in rapid speech by a young Tok Pisin speaker in an urban setting which an old Tolai villager who speaks Tok Pisin finds progressively hard to comprehend is given in **Example 2**:

em hungs so em go l' aus lo kaiks
hence em hangere so em go long haus long kaikai
she/he hungry so he/she went to house to eat
(he/she was hungry so he/she went to the house to eat)

‘Standard Tok Pisin’:

em i hangere so em i go long haus long kaikai
he/she was hungry so he/she went to the house to eat.
(he/she was hungry so he/she went to the house to eat)

This sentence is a typical example of the reduced form of Tok Pisin spoken in urban centres in Papua New Guinea which Smith (2002:84-85), also discusses.

Although Mühlhäusler (1975), pointed out three decades ago that high regional mobility of Tok Pisin speakers led to a fairly uniform pidgin spoken everywhere in the country, this is no longer the case. It must be pointed out that although there are these different varieties of Tok Pisin, rural Tok Pisin stands out as the ‘standard’ Tok Pisin; this has also been discussed by Romaine (1992), Mühlhäusler (2003), and Wurm (1979:239). According to Wurm, rural Tok Pisin is the most widely used form, both in terms of its geographical spread and the number of speakers. Despite the regional differences, rural Tok Pisin is generally understood by virtually all speakers of Tok Pisin (though some young children growing up in urban centres are monolectal speakers of the urban sociolect and are unable to understand rural pidgin; their number will obviously increase rapidly). Wurm (1979) points out that Tok Pisin speakers generally regard rural Tok Pisin as ‘the good Tok Pisin’ and some speakers of the urban dialect will admit that their Tok Pisin is not good, and that the ‘real’ Tok Pisin is the rural sociolect. Having thus described the regional varieties of Tok Pisin, we will now turn to urban Tok Pisin.

URBAN TOK PISIN: The Case of Port Moresby

As more and more Papua New Guineans are being educated, their use of Tok Pisin becomes heavily influenced by the lexifier language, ‘English’. Hirano (2001), points out that Tok Pisin started to decreolize in the 1970s because of Anglicization evidenced in the first two published books in Tok Pisin; ‘*The Jacaranda Dictionary and Grammar of Melanesian Pidgin (1971)* and ‘*The New Testament Niupela Testamen*’ (1969) (Mühlhäusler, 1979). According to Holm (2000:100), urban Tok Pisin has

been drawing ever more heavily on English for new words, especially in the speech of the educated elite who enjoy the most prestige. Holm also points out that the variety has now become more conservative and distinct from the rural variety of Tok Pisin. Bickerton (197:25), predicted eventual emergence of a continuum between English and Tok Pisin but the practice of code-switching indicates that this has not yet occurred (Mühlhäusler, 1982:455). This is similar to the findings of Jordan (1989) in her study on Solomon Islands Pijin, claiming that the situation in the Solomon Islands is one of code-switching and not of a continuum.

Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea, is one place where the Anglicization of Tok Pisin is at its highest. Given the fact that it is the nation's capital, Port Moresby attracts massive migration from rural areas, as people seek better education and good fortune. By and large, the rural Tok Pisin variety that they bring with them diminishes as they are exposed to the highly anglicized Tok Pisin of the urbanites of Port Moresby.

In this section, the author attempts to show the much anglicized Tok Pisin that is used in and around Port Moresby by the current Papua New Guinean musician residents in Port Moresby. This variety of Tok Pisin has been the result of massive borrowing and code-switching by educated Papua New Guineans and children for whom Tok Pisin is their L1. The examples that follow show a considerable amount of borrowing and code-switching, thus resulting in a kind of 'mixed language.' The data below confirm some of Smith's (2002) findings in his study on Papua New Guinea children for whom Tok Pisin is L1.

Example 3: Song 1. *Pacific Islands* PNG Artist - 'Potts'

English translations in are italicized.

1. Olgeta island bilong Pacific *All the islands belonging to the Pacific*
2. Yumi kamap na bung wantaim *We have come to gather together*
3. Sherim culture bilong yumi *To share our cultures*
4. Long makim Festival of Arts *To mark the festival of Arts*
5. Oh Pacific Islands yumi one big family *O Pacific Islands, we're one big family*
6. No matter different countries *No matter different countries*
7. We are one tasol *We are one (only)*
8. Oh Pacific Islands yumi one big family *Oh Pacific Islands we are one big family*
9. No matter different countries we are one *No matter different countries we are one*

*** Line 7:** **We are one tasol**
***Standard Tok Pisin:** **Yumi wanpela lain tasol**

Example 3 exhibits both the borrowing and the code-switching phenomena. Potts uses code-switching in: Line 1. *Island*, Line 3. *Culture*, Line 4. *Festival of arts*; then he suddenly switches to English phrases, as

in Line 4. *Festival of arts*, Line 5. *One big family*, Lines 6 & 7 *No matter different countries we are one*. Potts also uses ‘sherim’ (*share*) in line 3 and ‘makim’ in line 4 which, according to Myers Scotton (1992), is a type of code-switch consisting of mixed constituents, as they take their root form from one language and inflection from another. The same also applies to examples 4 - 9 below. Also, in all seven examples, a line in each song lyrics is identified in bold print and is compared with standard Tok Pisin (with asterisks *). These comparisons indicate the changes Tok Pisin is now undergoing as a result of massive exposure to English.

Example 4: Song 2. Rabaul PNG Artist - ‘Potts’

1. Yu kisim bus na drive i go *You get on the bus and drive off*
2. Yu ken lukim planti kain kain samting *You can see many different kinds of things*
3. Em bai you no nap lus tingting long Rabaul. *That is you won't forget Rabaul*
4. Yu ken lukim ol big forest, blue lagoon na ol volcano. *You can see the big forest, blue lagoon & volcanoes*
5. Na Rabaul town nau i bagarap *And Rabaul town has now been destroyed*
6. Yeh kam na holiday long Rabaul *Yeah, come and spend your holidays in Rabaul*
7. Em i sweet tumas na stap *It's a sweet place to stay*
8. Yu bai raon long olgeta hap *You will be able to go to all the places*
9. Na bai you no nap lus tingting long en *And you will not forget about it (Rabaul)*

***Line 7:** **Em i sweet tumas na stap**
***Standard Tok Pisin:** **Em (Rabaul) i gutpla peles turu na i stap**

In Example 4, we see lexical items either borrowed straight from English or borrowed and integrated into Tok Pisin structure as in Line 1. bus ‘bus’, drive ‘drive’, Line 4. *big forest, blue lagoon, volcano*, Line 6. *holiday*, Line 7. *sweet*.

Example 5: Song 3. Meri Lewa PNG Artist - ‘Oshen’

1. Boys taim you stap longwe lo meri blo yu. *Boys, when you are far away from your girl*
2. Na you misim em turu *And you miss her very much*
3. Traim pleim em disla song ya *Try play her this song*

***Line 1:** **Boys taim yu stap longwe lo meri blo yu**
***Standard Tok Pisin:** **Ol pikinini man taim yu stap longwe long meri bilong yu**

Example 5 shows the following: line 1. *boys* line 2. *misim* ‘miss’, line 3. *traim* ‘try’, *pleim* ‘play’, *song*.

Example 6: Song 4. Queen Four Lane PNG Artist - ‘Leonard Kania’

1. First time you only tru lo lukim yu *The very first time I saw you*
2. Long hia long Kokopo Taon *Here at Kokopo Town*
3. Hey liklik face bilong yu *Hey, your tiny little face*

4. i paulim tingting bilong mi *Got my mind confused*
5. Na bai mi mekim wonem nau *And what will I do now*
6. Mi admairim you tasol *I'll just admire you*

***Line 6:** mi admairim yu tasol
***Standard Tok Pisin:** mi mangalim yu tasol

Example 6 contains the following words derived from English: Line 1, first time, lukim 'look', you 'you', Line 2, hia 'here', taon 'town', Line 3, face, Line 5, mekim 'make', Line 6, admairim 'admire'.

Example 7: Song 5. Ramandu Beach PNG Artist - 'Barike'

1. Mi bin sindaun long Ramandu Beach *I sat down at Ramandu beach*
2. Kol win i bloim mi gut turu *The cool breeze that blew was really good*
3. Mi lukluk i go long solwara em i nais tumas *I looked out to the sea, it was really nice*
4. Ol nambis bilong Ramandu i luk sore *Ramandu beach looked really calm*
5. Ol manmeri sindaun hamamas turu *Man & women sat very happily*
6. Ol kinkain bot i pulap long en *All kinds of boat filled up Ramandu beach*
7. Napim olgeta days *And even on all other days.*
8. Ramandu beach yu nais tumas *Ramandu beach you're really nice*
9. Kol wind blo yu i kol tumas *Your cool breeze is very cold*
10. Bilas bilong yu i stail turu insait long North Baining *Your decoration is very stylish in North Baining.*

***Line 8:** Ramandu beach yu nais tumas
***Standard Tok Pisin:** Ramandu nambis yu gutpela turu

Example 8 shows us the following: Line 1, beach, Line 2, kol 'cold', win 'wind', bloim 'blow' Line 7, days.

Example 8: Song 6. Baket (Home Brew) PNG Artist - 'Doggies'

1. Ol mangi dringim baket *The boys drank home brew from the bucket*
2. Wan kap, tu kap, tri kap *One cup, two cups, three cups*
3. Het i paul *Head malfunctioned*
4. Na ekting bikman nambaut *And they acted around like big man*
5. Mi jeles *I was jealous*
6. Spak pinis danis tulait *They were drunk already and danced till twilight (daybreak)*
7. Nogat sens na raon long bia maket *They were senseless and wandered around the beer market*
8. Swerim ol manmeri *They swore the men and women*

***Line 8:** Swerim ol manmeri
***Standard Tok Pisin:** Tok nogutim ol man na meri

Example 8 has the following: Line 1, dringim 'drink', baket 'bucket', Line 2, wan kap 'one cup', tu kap 'two cups', tri kap 'three cups', Line 3, het 'head', Line 4, ekting

'acting', bikman 'big man', Line 4. jeles 'jealous', Line 6. pinis 'finish', danis, 'dance',
Line 7. sens 'sense', maket 'market'. Line 8. swerim 'swear'

Example 9: Song 7. *Trupla Man* PNG Artist - 'Dadii Gii'

1. Yu noken bisi long ol kain toktok *Don't worry about the kind of words*
2. Long ol lain blong mi *of my family*
3. Na samting em olsem *The thing is*
4. mi save long tingting na feelings blong yu *I know what your thoughts & feelings are*
5. Olsem yu tu yu man ya na yu gat bulut *You are only human who s got blood*
6. Wonem samting you laik bai mi givim yu *Whatever it is that you want me to give you*
7. Mi tu mi man ya na mi needim presens blong yu *I am only human too and need your presence.*

***Line 1:** Yu noken bisi long ol kain toktok
***Standard Tok Pisin:** Yu noken tingting planti long ol kain toktok

Example 9 exhibits the following Tok Pisin words:

Line 1. bisi 'busy', kain 'kind', Line 4. Feelings, Line 6. givim 'give' Line 7. needim 'need',
presens 'presence'.

The above examples from songs by Papua New Guinea musicians show that Tok Pisin, currently spoken in Port Moresby and other urban centres, is heavily anglicized. Whole utterances in each Tok Pisin song suddenly switch to English as in example 3 (Song 1), where we see whole phrases and even sentences in English ('one big family' and 'no matter different countries, we are one,' etc). Example 3 also shows that there is no discontinuity between Tok Pisin and English when code-switching. English phrases are incorporated but do not interfere with the smooth flow of the Tok Pisin sentence as in 'Oh Pacific Islands yumi wan big family' and 'No matter different countries, we are one tasol'.

The examples also show situations where English phonology is retained despite the morphological adaptations in Tok Pisin as in Example 3. Line 3. Sherim 'share,' and Example 6 (Song 4) line 6. admairim 'admire,' etc. In these examples, we see some evidence of Tok Pisin forms converging with Standard English forms, particularly as more and more English words are incorporated into Tok Pisin lexicon. This seems to confirm the notion that Tok Pisin is decreolizing. Similar conclusions have also been made by Smith (2002).

CONCLUSION

In light of the above discussion, it is obvious that there is a Tok-Pisin-English Continuum which confirms Romaine's (1992) finding that Tok Pisin is decreolizing. However, the influence of English upon Tok

Pisin does not make the latter more like English, but results in what the researcher, in support of Wurm (1979:240), sees as a third system. Mühlhausler (1979:236) also shares the same view. He argues that renewed contact with the lexifier language will make a third system emerge. He points out that, in spite of heavy borrowing, urban Tok Pisin does not appear to become anymore readily intelligible to a speaker of English than the rural Tok Pisin dialect. At the same time, it becomes unintelligible to the speakers of rural Tok Pisin.

Nevertheless, if English continues to exert this strong influence on urban Tok Pisin over time, Tok Pisin's structures may also undergo Anglicization. The urban dialect of Tok Pisin may thus, eventually develop into a kind of Niuginian English, just as there is an Indian English which arose as a result of the contact between English speakers and Indians (Romaine 1989: 15).

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SOCIOLINGUISTIC PRESSURES ON POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES STUDYING OVERSEAS

Jillian Thiele

Pacific Adventist University

Jillian.Thiele@pau.ac.pg

ABSTRACT

Many adults in developing countries, such as Papua New Guinea (PNG), have the opportunity to pursue post graduate studies in developed countries. As adults, these students have the motivation, the desire, the educational background and independence to tackle this education opportunity. These students have overcome many educational stumbling blocks to achieve their level of education. They have a personal belief that further education is worthwhile and achievable. But learning is not achieved in a vacuum. There are social, cultural and linguistic factors that may either hinder or assist in their learning process. Dr Jillian Thiele, a senior lecturer at Pacific Adventist University in Port Moresby, PNG, interviewed ten returning scholars who had completed a masters or a doctorate in a developed country, such as Australia or the United States of America. Her findings demonstrate that some social issues, i.e., the students' previous learning practices, linguistic issues, etc., may be detrimental to their learning process. The rise of 'new' Englishes with their own pronunciation and accents caused initial problems along with their lack of exposure to "correct" language role modelling added an initial confusion at the beginning of the learning process. The students interviewed managed to overcome the initial hindrances, pass their courses and returned home with the desired degree.

KEYWORDS: Andragogy, post graduate students, adult learners

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INTRODUCTION

Education is the avenue of acquiring knowledge, in both formal and informal situations. It may be teacher-directed or self-directed. During the last thirty years, there has been a move towards more self-directed approaches to learning, where learners take greater responsibility for their own learning. This is one reason for the general acceptance of Outcomes Based Education. The "outcomes" enable students to track their own learning progress. This paper examines the social and linguistic factors that enhance or hinder post graduate students from developing countries who studied overseas in developed countries. Since the writer is resident in Papua New Guinea, her data has been collected from informal interviews with returning students.

ANDRAGOGY

As individuals mature and enter adulthood, they become increasingly independent and responsible for their own actions. They are often motivated to learn by a sincere desire to solve their own immediate problems. There is a sense of self-direction. Malcolm Knowles, professor of adult education at Boston University, introduced the concept of andragogy in his 1968 article *Adult Leadership*. He expanded this idea in his 1970 book, *Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy versus Pedagogy*. He argued that andragogy was a system of ideas, concepts and approaches needed for adult learning. It was the art and science of helping adults learn. He asserted that andragogy involves the creation of a situation where adults can learn effectively. Mature adult learners are often motivated to learn by a sincere desire to solve economic and social problems in their lives. Many adult learners have overcome inhibitions, behaviours, and negative attitudes about themselves, and have accumulated a reservoir of experiences that can be used as a basis on which to build, plan and evaluate their own educational needs. They have the self-confidence and independence to be involved in the planning and evaluating of their own instruction—which they are undertaking for their own employment benefit and/or personal enrichment. Knowles believes that if andragogy were applied correctly by skilled and dedicated facilitators, adults would embrace the idea of further education. He argues that adult learning is centred on problem-solving rather than on content. Finding adequate solutions to problems becomes the reason for acquiring new knowledge. Mature students want to know “why” rather than “what.” Knowles’ androgogical model assumes that all adult learners have a desire to take responsibility for learning. The basis of their self-concept has moved from dependency to independency or self-directedness. Their readiness to learn is associated with, and reflects their roles in society (Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990). Brookfield (1984), a supporter of Knowles, assumes that most adult learners have sufficient self-confidence and self-motivation to be involved in the development of their own education. He believed that adults learn best when they are ready and motivated to learn. The ability to carry out individual learning long after the stimulation of an activity, class or workshop, derives from individualizing the instructional process through andragogy (Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990).

IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

As developing countries mature towards post-industrialisation, there are opportunities for adult learners to continue their post graduate education overseas. Sponsoring bodies are encouraging citizens to gain technical qualifications, masters and doctorates in specialised content areas. AusAid, for example, sponsors scholars to pursue further studies. Many bright young university graduates are offered scholarships to continue their education overseas by various commercial and academic organizations whose goal is to assist in the development of the academic and technical sectors in this country.

Students who are selected for further studies have already achieved a high level of literacy. They are able to concentrate on problem solving, and simultaneously consider an array of ideas that enables a person to have indefinite extension of an argument (Winchester, 1985:45). At the same time, these selected individuals are aware of their own cultural and personal biases and can filter the suitability of the new information through their cultural lenses (Cole & Keyssar, 1985:56).

METHODOLOGY

The writer of this paper, Dr Jillian Thiele, has been an educator in PNG for seventeen years. Dr Thiele interviewed ten returning PNG scholars who had completed a masters or a doctorate in a developed country, such as Australia or the United States of America. Five of these scholars returned to administrative positions at secondary schools and the other five returned to lecturing at various universities around PNG. She has informally confirmed her finding with national and international colleagues who have also studied overseas.

FINDINGS

There are social and linguistic factors that may help or discourage students from pursuing post graduate studies in a developed country. These findings outline the major factors that confront the adult learner who wishes to pursue further studies:

SOCIAL FACTORS

1. Teaching and learning practices

The first impediment to adult learning is the influence of the strongly pedagogical, teacher-focused education in most students' previous education experiences. Most adults had attended secondary schools where the teachers were responsible for all the teaching methods, learning strategies and the construction of the entire subject matter. This was usually necessary due to the class size. Even at the university, many lecturers present their material by the chalk and talk approach rather than implementing problem solving and self-discovery methods of learning. By the time post graduate students have the opportunity to study overseas, many feel comfortable in the pedagogy approach and feel threatened by the methods of andragogy, self-discovery and self-directed learning. The interviewed post graduate students reported that they were initially very confronted by their lecturers' direct questioning and the expectation that they would contribute to classroom discussions. Fear that their answers would be wrong made them hesitant to contribute. Only as they became aware that all answers have a degree of acceptability were they prepared

to volunteer comments and answers. Most interviewees reported that it took them about six months to begin to feel comfortable enough to actively contribute to group work and peer discussions. This is not to say the students do not have the ability; however, their cultural norms and previous educational experiences had emphasized practical skills and lower levels of thinking. Higher levels of education are concerned with why a concept or idea is important. Such learning entails posing a problem and using lateral thinking to find a solution. This is a model for effective learning used in most modern universities.

One of the interviewees related that his greatest initial linguistic obstacle was to know what was expected of him in terms of linguistic performance and behaviour. He did not know when to speak, when to remain silent and when to argue with the lecturer. He was unsure of how to talk to women because in his culture you did not talk directly to a female that was not in your immediate family. However, in the university setting, gender issues were ignored. He experienced confusion with the ethnography of communication (Wardhaugh, 1998: 243), 'cultural know-how', a common problem for people moving from one linguistic group to another.

Interviewees claimed that if they formally paired up with another more educated student, it took them less time to adapt to new university life. This person assisted them in two ways. First, the 'helpers' gave hints on how to cope with the new culture and social expectations; and, secondly, they helped them organise their ideas and created scaffolds for future learning in a fair and unbiased manner. A sense of group responsibility for each other seems invaluable in encouraging the learning process.

2. Use of technology

In the current environment of technological revolution, post graduate students have increased opportunities to pursue educational opportunities. E-learning offers unprecedented opportunities for students to participate in and contribute to the learning process. Students can use the internet to access a huge variety of documents, as well as to participate in on-line discussions with their teachers and fellow students. E-learning provides a "real-life" feel to distance learning, because students can participate in a true exchange of knowledge and ideas (Creedy & Hand, 1994). On-line communication has become global, thereby enriching and expanding the students' knowledge base.

In a University setting, there are often shared group responsibilities for learning, even if the assessments are individually marked. Group activities require mutual respect and equality from the participants, as they interact and learn from each other. Androgical teaching in a University setting promotes the virtues needed for this interaction to be effective: respect, responsibility, and active participation leading to increased knowledge. All students can benefit from the use of technology, if they know how to use it!

One interviewee gave an example of her first assignment. She was asked to prepare a PowerPoint presentation of the information found in an online library catalogue and selected online journals and to send the assignment by email to the lecturer. The student's reaction was, 'What's an online library catalogue? How do you make a PowerPoint?' She had only ever seen a card catalogue. What was an online journal? At Teachers' College, the student had to request a journal and then stay in an allocated room before returning the journal back to the librarian. At her previous secondary school, electricity was only provided for a few hours a day, so her exposure to PowerPoint construction had been limited. The light bulb in the school's one data projector had blown and there was no replacement. The student was forced to concentrate on the process, rather than on understanding the content of the assignment. Each interviewee mentioned technology as being an initial problem to their learning process. As technology access improves, these situations will become very rare, but it does illustrate that not all post graduate students have the technology know-how to satisfactorily complete their academic requirements.

LINGUISTIC FACTORS

Linguistic competence in communication involves a mixture of factors: situational issues, language input, learner differences, learning processes and opportunities for linguistic output (Ellis, 1985). Linguistic variability between the student, the peers and the teacher can lead to misunderstanding and language confusion (Wardhaugh, 1998:204). Communication is an interpersonal enterprise involving a social structure context (Fondacaro & Higgins, 1985:74). If a teacher is not aware of this context and is not aware of linguistic hurdles faced by students, the education process can be distorted (Jones, 2003:118).

1. Rise of 'new' Englishes

Most developed countries expect their post graduate students to be competent in English, but the English in the developing country may not be the same English that is required. In second Diaspora English speaking countries (Kachru, 1992:234), many have undergone two major linguistic changes, nativization and acculturation. Nativization is language readjustment and approximation of an imported language to the linguistic and discorsal characteristics of local languages and usually occurs in countries, desperately needing to use English for political and economic stability. Acculturation is the reflection of sociocultural identities in the languages that are used in a given society. As these processes intensify and lexical diffusion occurs (Aitcheson, 1991:81), local varieties of English emerge, often called 'New Englishes.' The communicative functions of this new form of English are the same, but the structures and forms of the language may deviate from standard use. 'New' English has its own characteristic features and communicative styles (Romaine, 1992:254) which reflect and express local identity (Crystal, 2006:101). The differences between Standard English and the local version of English can create linguistic confusion.

2. *Pronunciation*

Another interviewee said, “Unfamiliar pronunciation caused me the most problems. I recognised the written word, but it took me a while to understand the spoken word. When I understood the spoken word, then my comprehension greatly improved.” In countries where post-colonial English is still used as a language of politics, business and the judiciary, the pronunciation of English words can be radically different from that of native English speakers. This is easily illustrated with word stress. For some, the word *research* is acceptable while many others say *research*. The same can be said regarding *distribute* and *distribute*. For example, in the Pacific Islands, *research* and *distribute* are the common forms, where the first syllable is stressed. This is very different from the Received Pronunciation where the second syllable is often stressed. Crystal (2006:186) predicts that the highly praised Received Pronunciation monopoly is “slowly [being] lowered into its coffin,” as new pronunciation systems emerge.

Growing multilingualism has often resulted in greater respect for traditional languages and deeper appreciation of their corresponding phonetic systems. The mother tongue (its sounds, structures and vocabulary) can cause interference with a new language. Although many schools in developed countries have reduced the time spent on pronunciation exercises, developing countries, such as PNG, still include pronunciation activities in their English syllabus. There has been an emphasis on practising the ‘correct’ pronunciation. The problem is that the ‘correct’ pronunciation is not necessarily the model used on the street or applied outside the classroom. Without any conscious effort, a new form of pronunciation has arisen, basically reflecting the phonetic languages and word stress of the local languages, rather than reflecting classroom instruction. Students struggle to see the relevance of pronunciation activities in such a context.

The system of pronunciation that speakers use is called their “accent”. This involves the way sound segments – vowels and consonants – are produced. It also involves the speed, as well as the rhythm, stress, pitch and volume of the utterance. For example, many people in the Pacific replace [f] with [p], and [θ] with [d] or [t]. Many students in the Pacific are aware of phoneme shifts that occur under the influence of their mother tongue, but are not aware of how to change their pronunciation patterns. For example, students need to be made aware of the more common phonetic changes, such as the shift from [s] to [ʃ]; [f] to [p]; [l] to [r] (i.e., *curriculum* vs. *culliculum*); [i:] to [i], etc. Often, the final [-id] is not pronounced or is substituted with a [t]. In many local dialects, there is a process of sound shifts. Even in English, there has been a shift from a strong [r] sound after a vowel. In most varieties of English, the [r] sound after vowels is not pronounced (Thiele, 2003).

Sometimes, these social accents are accepted, valued and regarded as standard, while in other societies, they are regarded as incorrect, ugly, lacking in aesthetic appeal, and speakers are stigmatized as lazy and imprecise (Freeborn, 1986:73). If a person's accent is regarded in a negative way, they could also be treated negatively. It is important that there is an awareness of individual phonetic alphabet.

Pronunciation should not be regarded as right or wrong, just different. A couple of interviewees said they had been embarrassed by their pronunciation of words.

3. *Language role modelling*

In all societies, but particularly in multilingual societies, communication is embedded within a sociolinguistic environment. Written communication with its emphasis on 'correct' construction influences the social cognitive environment (Fondacaro & Higgins, 1985:77, 95). The written form of the construction is remembered and regarded as standard (Chafe, 1985:107). Continual exposure to an incorrect form will become embedded in the subconscious as correct. Billboards, the media and correspondence offer display messages using incorrect forms of English, especially in places where English is only one of the languages used. Usually, English syntax has been simplified and applied generally. These incorrect forms are often accepted as the correct form, as the less well educated majority are unfamiliar with the proper forms of grammar. In a sense, these incorrect forms become entrenched and fossilised in the linguistic framework. There is a sense that the general population are partly incipient bilinguals, with a partial knowledge of English, rather than balanced bilinguals, knowing languages at their disposal equally (Baker, 1993:7-9).

CONCLUSION

Even though many post graduate students struggle when they first attempt university study programs, they quickly adapt and learn the cultural and learning norms. Even though self directed learning seems riddled with difficulties, it does not take long for these determined post graduate students to overcome their initial fears and quickly become active and motivated learners. They embrace new technology, begin to understand the problems associated with their pronunciation and quickly adapt to the new situation. These students are aware that education is the avenue of acquiring knowledge, in both formal and informal situations.

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