

folktales. *Workpapers in Indonesian Languages and Culture* 2:37-56.

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Received 6 December 1991

*Pacific Island Languages: Essays in honour of G.B. Milner*. Ed. by J.H.D.S. Davidson. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990. viii+196 pp. pb. US\$18.00.

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This volume contains eleven papers presented to George Milner, with a biographical note by Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara and a bibliography of Milner's work compiled by Helen Cordell. As befits their honoree, the papers are largely concerned with languages of eastern Oceania, but there is much here for readers of this journal whose interests are centred in related languages spoken further west.

All the papers except Jeff Siegel's (on Fiji Pidgin Hindustani) are concerned with languages belonging to the Oceanic language family. This is a subgroup of the

Austronesian family and includes all Austronesian languages spoken east of a line roughly bisecting Irian Jaya. Its members are demonstrably descended from a single earlier Austronesian language usually labelled 'Proto Oceanic' (POC), and they may be divided for convenience into Western (Ross 1988) and Eastern (Geraghty, in the paper reviewed below) subgroups, although the genetic unity of both would be disputed by some scholars. Within Eastern Oceanic, a Central Pacific subgroup is recognised: it comprises the languages of Fiji, Rotuma and Polynesia.

The volume's papers can be divided into three groups. First, Robert Blust, George Grace and Paul Geraghty deal with topics in the reconstruction of the prehistory of Oceanic languages. Secondly, Albert Schütz, David Arms and Andrew Pawley/Timoci Sayaba present refinements of the description of Fijian. The remaining papers deal with a variety of topics. The collection as a whole is rich in information and analysis, to which the brief summaries and very limited comments in this review do but curtailed justice. The papers are summarised below in the three above-mentioned groups, rather than in their sequence of occurrence in the book.

Blust's paper describes three sound changes each of which has occurred in a number of widely distributed Oceanic (and some non-Oceanic Austronesian) languages, but which have not been found outside the Austronesian family, at least not in quite the forms in which they appear in the languages he discusses. The sound changes are (i) accretion of \*[y] before initial \*a, both where \*a was inherited from POC and where it occurred following the loss of a POC initial consonant; (ii) \*t → ʔ; and (iii) syncope of a vowel between like consonants. For these changes Blust examines possible explanations based on genetic relationship, diffusion, universals, and chance, but finds that none is adequate. Each of the three changes is, in Blust's words, 'a theoretical conundrum: how can it happen that a parallel change has occurred independently in several Austronesian languages/groups and yet apparently has not occurred in languages outside the Austronesian family? One may add that (ii) has also occurred in four languages to which Blust does not refer, all located in central Papua: Kuni, Lala, Gabadi, and Doura. There are some unfortunate typographical errors in Blust's paper on p.9, where *m* is misplaced in Fig. 1 and [ny] occurs for expected [nz] two lines below Fig. 1, and on p.10, where [ŋa] occurs in error for [ŋa] in the second line of 2.1.

In his paper on "consonant grade" Grace returns to a long-recognised problem. Most Oceanic languages have two reflexes of each of the POC consonants which Grace writes as \*p, \*t, \*d, \*k, and \*s (and sometimes three reflexes of \*p and \*k). Because of this, Grace and others have also reconstructed for POC the prenasalised phones \*mp, \*nt, \*nd, \*ŋk, and \*ns. For example, Fijian *v* is derived from POC \*p, but *b* from POC \*mp. However, \*p and \*mp are not, on Grace's interpre-

tation, separate phonemes, but rather alternants or 'grades' of a single phoneme, since in a given lexical item some Oceanic languages will reflect \*p, others \*mp, and occurrences of the two reflexes are unpredictable. The same is true of the other four POC pairs.

Grace first examines the 'grade alternation' hypothesis that the pairs reflect one or more morphological alternations which were productive in POC but not in any known modern language. He then turns to the 'prenasalisation hypothesis', originated by Geraghty (1983), according to which the alternations reflected with different distributions in various modern languages are the result of a number of processes which have occurred at different times and places: Geraghty proposes eastern Fijian apical prenasalisation as such a process. Grace gives reasons for finding both hypotheses unsatisfactory and ends with a list of unanswered questions. He adds that Ross (1988) appeared after his paper was finished and that his discussion "should henceforth be considered in the light of the explanation of the consonant grade phenomenon proposed therein." Even a summary of that explanation (in chapter 3 and sections 8.7.3 and 9.3.3) is outside the scope of this review: suffice it to say that it entails elements of both Grace's hypotheses, as well as other proposals.

In his "Proto-Eastern Oceanic \*R and its reflexes" Geraghty presents 193 Proto Eastern Oceanic (PEO) reconstructions containing the POC/PEO phoneme \*R, the reflexes of which are problematic in a number of Oceanic languages. Geraghty's paper is significant in at least four respects. Firstly, he offers a number of previously unpublished reconstructions relevant to students of Oceania's linguistic and cultural prehistory. Secondly, he shows that, within

the general tendency for \*R to be deleted the further one moves away from the Western Oceanic subgroup, there are areas in which reflexes of \*R show varying degrees of unpredictability, which he attributed to borrowing (he notes that this is especially true of the names of food plants). The significance of this observation is that items without POC \*R are presumably just as subject to borrowing as items with it: that is, Geraghty identifies areas where comparativists need to be especially alert to borrowing. The third significant implication of this paper is that the distributions of \*R reflexes in the North/Central and Southern Vanuatu linguistic areas are related, suggesting that they once formed a single dialect network: although this is geographically probable, these areas have usually been treated as separate first-order Oceanic subgroups, whereas Geraghty's observation suggests a much closer genetic relationship (which may also extend to New Caledonia: see Geraghty 1989). This topic clearly merits further research. Fourthly, Geraghty shows that \*R was not (as usually assumed) lost in Proto Central Pacific, as non-zero reflexes occur in western Fijian communallects and in Rotuman.

Geraghty's use of Western Oceanic data requires some minor comments. It is probable (p.83) that POC inherited both \*maRuʔane and \*mwaʔane 'male', and that these reflect Proto Malayo-Polynesian \*m<aR>uqanay with and without the infix, i.e. forms without \*R as *n* (rather than as a voiceless lateral). Three of his four cases are suspect, however. Firstly, Gedaged *ʔani* 'new' reflects the North New Guinea innovation \*paqu (for expected \*paqoRu; Ross 1988:188) plus a fossilised reflex of POC \*-ña 'third person singular possessor', consistent with the Western Oceanic pattern whereby an adjective has a possessor suffix agreeing in person and number with

its head noun. Secondly, Gedaged *ʔami* 'wing' reflects POC \*bani-, as Geraghty suggests (confirmed by data in Tryon, ed. in press). Thirdly, evidence from a number of Austronesian languages suggests that POC \*Rujan 'load' was one of a (poorly understood) set of alternants which also included \*lujan and \*ujan (Blust 1986:62); it is therefore not certain that Gedaged *nusi* is descended from \*Rujan.

We turn now to the three papers concerned with the description of Fijian. Schütz describes phonological changes which occur in less deliberate, more casual speech, namely the shortening of long vowels in certain prosodically defined environments and the reassignment of stress. The typographical omission on p. 125 of macrons from C $\bar{V}$  (line 9) and CVC $\bar{V}$  (line 11), however, causes some difficulty in following the final part of his argument.

Arms provides a succinct and useful update on Fijianists' understanding of the verb in Standard Fijian. He does not always agree with other scholars, but he explains his disagreements very clearly. He describes the structure of the verb phrase, the division of verbs into agent- and patient-oriented classes, and the relationships between these formal classes and (i) the semantic characterisations of verbs, (ii) Schütz's (1985) 'active' and 'stative' classes, (iii) the Fijian passive, and (iv) derivational morphemes occurring on verbs.

Like Arms' paper, Pawley and Sayaba's refines the description of an area of grammar, here the system of marking possession. Although they describe the system in the Wayan dialect (which has interesting formal differences from the standard), their conclusions are -- as they observe -- also applicable to Standard Fijian. Their point of departure is that

scholars have given two competing accounts of Fijian possessive-marking. Under one account, the various morphosyntactic formulae of possession mark noun classes; under the other, semantic relations between possessor and possessed. Pawley and Sayaba analyse Wayan possessive-marking in terms of construction types which are "distinctive in both form and meaning" (p. 153) and arrive at eight such types. They show that neither of the two accounts just mentioned is adequate: Wayan possessive-marking is complex and its description requires elements from both accounts. Their contribution is significant at two levels: it gives us a detailed description of Wayan possessive-marking, and its analyses and its typological features in a way which is relevant to the description not only of Standard Fijian but also of a good many other Oceanic languages. Arms' paper and Pawley and Sayaba's both provide baselines which will be useful to future grammarians of Oceanic languages, both Western and Eastern.

The other five papers in the volume cover a variety of topics. Bruce Biggs' "Extraordinary eight" draws our attention to the fact that in the Central Pacific area (and perhaps also elsewhere in the Pacific Basin and east Asian region) the number *eight* "occurs with considerably more than chance frequency ... usually in a context that indicates remarkable powers or superior rank" (p. 37), whereas in the West it is often *three* that is the propitious number and *seven* that is associated with the extraordinary or the supernatural.

Even Hovdhaugen's contribution gives the distribution of long vowels in Samoan and lists their morphological functions. He makes two interesting points about non-word-final vowels in Samoan phonological structure. The first is that the usual

analysis in Polynesian languages of long vowels as a sequence of two vowel phonemes is satisfactory in Samoan only word-finally: it does not work elsewhere. The second point is that the distribution of non-word-final long and short vowels is governed by rhythmical patterns, the most important of which usually eliminates long vowels from the middle syllable of a trisyllable.

Clause Tchekhoff gives a brief but informative account of the uses of the three Tongan directional particles *mai*, *atu*, and *ange*. The use of these assumes a centre of discourse interest, and prototypically their respective meanings are 'towards the centre', 'away from the centre', and 'to/from someone other than the centre'. However, the contextually determined centre of interest may be the speaker or someone else, and the meanings of the directionals change accordingly. If the speaker is the centre, then they come to mean 'towards me', '(from me) towards you', 'towards a third person', and, by extension, to express various culturally embedded empathetic meanings.

David Walsh compares descent group and kin terms published by W.H.R. Rivers in 1914 for Raga of northern Pentecost (Vanuatu) with those he collected himself some sixty years later. He finds that the descent group system has undergone radical simplification and that the range of application of kin terms has changed substantially. One would be tempted to question the accuracy of Rivers' often second-hand data, but for (i) the fact that Rivers' distinctions between same- and opposite-sex siblings, lost in the intervening 60 years, accord well with other Oceanic data and (ii) the discovery by the editor of the volume under review (recorded in a footnote) of a manuscript Raga dictionary which

includes some of Rivers' terms which are unknown to Walsh's informants.

We come finally to the one paper in the volume to deal with a recently arrived and non-Austronesian Pacific Island language, Fiji Pidgin Hindustani (FPH). Siegel provides a brief description of the salient features of this language and compares it with Fiji Hindustani, the koine used among Fiji Indians. Today FPH is used in communication between non-English-speaking Fiji Indians and Fijians. However, Siegel shows that it did not originate in this situation. Instead, it developed on the plantations as a medium of communication between (mainly Hindi-speaking) north Indians, (often non-Hindi-speaking) south Indians, and Europeans, and acquired its present function only more recently. For the reader familiar with PNG, there is an interesting parallel between the history of FPH and Tok Pisin, which also has its origins in Pacific Island plantation contact between Europeans and various islander groups but is today used largely in communication between different groups in Papua New Guinea.

In general this volume is well presented, except for the typographical errors noted above, and is a welcome addition to the literature on Pacific languages.

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Received 6 December 1991

*An Illustrated Bislama-English and English-Bislama Dictionary*. By Terry Crowley. Vila: Pacific Languages Unit and Vanuatu Extension Centre of the University of the South Pacific, 1990. vii + 478 pp. AUS\$8.75.

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For any pidginist the publication of a new pidgin dictionary is always quite an event, especially in Vanuatu where the last Bislama dictionary, that of Pastor Bill Camden, dates back to 1977, a time when the country was still named the New Hebrides.