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The Newsletter of the
Linguistic Society of Papua New Guinea
September 1986

Lest you are wondering if you have missed something, this is the first newsletter since early 1985. For various reasons, the past year has not been a good one but the future looks more promising. You should have received volume 14 of Language and Linguistics in Melanesia during the latter half of last year. We know that most of you have because we have received payment for most of the invoices enclosed with it. We trust you appreciate the articles it contains, and consider it worth the wait.

Since the last letter, two conferences have been held, this year's being the Second International Conference on Papuan Linguistics. Perhaps it is indicative of the state of Papuan linguistics that three of the papers this year were comparative in nature and proposed proto-forms for specific language families. Bernard Comrie's presentation, based on his recent ten months research, compared Harway/Wiyaw and Aramo with Kobon and Kalam, concluding that they were not related. Tom Dutton brought us up to date on his reconstruction of proto-Koiarian. John Haiman proposed the proto-forms for different referent medial desinences in the Gorokan languages (East Central Family of the East New Guinea Highlands Stock). Graham Scott surveyed a variety of indirect speech constructions in various Papuan Languages. Others' papers described the uses of tone in marking aspectual and modal distinctions of Iau (Irian Jaya), verb serialisation in Kobon, clitics in Burum-Mindik, and the category 'relevance' in Menya verbal morphology. Two papers not relating to Papuan languages were also included: the results of a survey of language usage and vernacular education needs in the Northern Province, and the use and power of language amongst the Merai-Ulu of Ambae, Vanuatu. I think it is safe to say that, in spite of the low number of participants, everyone present felt the conference well worthwhile. A major contributant to this success was the time spent in informal conversation during meals and between sessions. The facilities of the National Sports Institute are so well suited to this that it has been decided to hold next year's conference there also. (See below for more details.)

Other items on the agenda for the conference were a panel discussing the direction national policy on broadcasting in Papua New Guinea should take, and the 20th annual general meeting. The former of these was deemed appropriate since the government is seeking public opinion, to help in establishing guidelines for the introduction of television in the country. (See below for the motion which was passed during the A.G.M.)

The officers elected for 1986-7 at the A.G.M. are as follows:

president - Micael Olsson
 secretary - Carl Whitehead
 treasurer - Colin Barron
 editors - Tom Dutton
 - John Verhaar
 member - Fa'afu Pat

Two editors were elected with the understanding that John and Tom would determine the allocating of responsibilities; they subsequently decided that John would function as articles editor and Tom as review editor.

The status of LALIM and Special Publication No. 2 (Language Policy in Oceania) were the subject of considerable discussion. Given that volume 14 was the issue for 1983, the journal is three issues behind schedule. It was determined that the major problems were the lack of articles being submitted (possibly in part due to the announced raising of standard at the time of the name change) and the other responsibilities recent editors have had, preventing them from actively soliciting articles. With reference to the special publication, it was moved that we contact its editors and, unless they envisage producing it within twelve months, transferring the articles submitted to a regular issue of the journal and crediting those who have already paid for it. It was also decided that no further special issues should be approved until the journal has been brought up to date. According to the latest word from the special publication's editors, the final editing should be done this month.

The aim of the new editors of the journal is to produce three volumes during the 1986-7 year, making it possible to be up-to-date by producing two more in the following year. These will be dated as 'Volume 15, 1987 (in lieu of 1984)', etc. Needless to say, any articles submitted will be appreciated and given serious consideration. Articles and notices for publication should be sent to direct to John Verhaar; any correspondence concerning reviews should be sent direct to Tom Dutton. (See below for addresses).

We thank you for your patience and trust you will join us in looking forward with confidence to the coming issues of the journal. Any comments, queries or suggestions should be addressed to: The Secretary, L.S.P.N.G., P.O. Box 418, UKarumpa via Lae, Papua New Guinea.

Motion Sent to the Commission on Broadcasting Policy

The 20th Annual Congress of the Linguistic Society of Papua New Guinea passed the following resolution to be directed to the current commission on broadcasting policy:

Considering the need to ensure that broadcasting and television reflect the multi-cultural and multi-lingual nature of Papua New Guinea society and considering the fact that the critical shortage of locally produced programmes in other developing countries has been due to the lack of funds for programme production, this congress strongly recommends that license revenues from television warrants be reserved for local programme production and that local programme production include:

- A. professionally qualified staff to ensure improved translations and better use of national languages...and
- B. subsidy for LOCAL training programmes for the staff of television operators that include the study of national languages, rural development issues, and common cultural values.

The congress further recommended that the body empowered to issue warrants for television operators and to set the terms and conditions for those warrants include people who are authorities on (1) PNG languages, (2) PNG cultural values, (3) nonformal education in PNG.

Announcements

1987 LSPNG Conference.

Dates: July 8-10/11, 1987
Place: National Sports Institute, Goroka
Costs: to be announced

International Conference on Tok Pisin.

Dates: July 13-18, 1987
Place: Madang
Contact: John W. M. Verhaar (see below)

Language and Linguistics in Melanesia

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Style Specifications:

For LLM a new stylesheet will be printed in vol. 15 of the journal, and in every subsequent volume/issue. The new stylesheet does require a few things the Language stylesheet does not, but also does not require many things the Language stylesheet does.

Meanwhile, submissions should be in three copies, double spaced, one side only, with footnotes at the end followed by the bibliography. The author's name and address should be on the title page.