

Rainer Carle, Martina Heinschke, Peter W. Pink, Christel Rost and Karen Stadlander (eds), Gava': Studies in Austronesian Languages and Cultures/Studien zu austronesischen Sprachen und Kulturen, dedicated to Hans Kähler gewidmet, Veröffentlichungen des Seminars für Indonesischen und Südseesprachen der Universität Hamburg, Band 17, Dietrich Reimer Verlag, Berlin, 1982. xviii + 707.

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This volume was edited by a group of Hans Kähler's students, in honor of his trail-blazing linguistic work in Austronesian linguistics, on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. Stephen Wurm and Arthur Capell, themselves something of elderly statesmen in the area, in their introduction "Hans Kähler's Schaffen und Lebenswerk" (pp.ix-xiii) outline Kähler's career, pointing out that his interests lay not only in the area of linguistics, but in the area of Austronesian cultures and literatures also. There is ample testament to this fact in the titles of his published works, that run to five pages in all (pp.xiv-xviii). I myself first came into contact with the writings of Hans Kähler in the mid 1970's, when my interest in Austronesian linguistics was just beginning and I read with interest his early account of what to me looked like the very Oceanic structure of Enggano, spoken off the coast of Sumatra. I had intended to go to Enggano to try to find out how the language got that way. I never actually made it, but his description fanned my kindling interest in Austronesian linguistics, such that I eventually ended up in Vanuatu doing research in Oceanic languages (and now teaching). I am sure that Hans Kähler was proud to see such a collection of well known names paying tribute to him in this volume. The range and depth of the contributions is a genuine

memorial to the efforts of this scholar who spawned a wide range of studies in this area.

The volume is divided into two broad parts. The first deals with language, and the second with culture and society. The first part is further subdivided geographically into three sections, one relating to Austronesian languages generally, one to New Guinea and Oceanic languages, and the last to East and Southeast Asian languages. There are only nine papers in the second part, all dealing with the Asian area rather than Oceania.

Fortunately for me as an anglophone reviewer, twenty-eight of the thirty-six papers in all are in English rather than German. I would like to be able to say that I had read all papers, including those in German, but I have to candidly admit that my rather limited German left me gasping for air after the Vorwort and the Einleitung. There is, however, a real debt that anglophone Austronesianists owe to German scholarship, both in the past and in the present, that many, including myself, are allowing themselves to ignore.

In reviewing this volume, I have made the deliberate choice to concentrate on the language papers. Space in a short review such as this also prevents me from referring to all papers, so I will be selective. What I select will, I imagine, reveal some of my own interests and prejudices, and I would not want to suggest that any paper that is not mentioned is not worthy of mention.

The question of linguistic diversity in Melanesia as against the relative homogeneity of Polynesia is one that has become a "hot" issue of late, with contributions from Pawley (1981) and Lynch (1981). Laycock's paper (pp.31-37) opens up a new area in this discussion by suggesting that there is evidence that Melanesians exhibit a predilection for deliberate intervention in language change. This is a fascinating possibility - language planning without committees! He cites as evidence the case of the Usiai and Buin dialects of Buin, where what are masculine forms in

one dialect mark the feminine in the other, and vice versa, arguing that there is no known "natural" mechanism for such a "flip-flop" to occur. Laycock does not present his evidence however. It would be most interesting if this were ultimately proved to be the case, and not simply a reduction in two different directions of some kind of earlier more complex noun class or gender system.

Mühlhäusler (pp.57-66) asks a very interesting question about the development of pidgin languages: Why do they acquire certain constructions at certain times in their development rather than others? For instance, why did Tok Pisin not acquire a transitive suffix -im until after several decades of contact with Tolai, and why did the plural -s morpheme not start to get used until the present generation, despite long periods of exposure? His suggested answer is that a pidgin will not borrow a construction that is "abnatural" for its particular stage of development. That is to say, the pidgin must be "ripè" for that particular development to occur. This is an interesting concept, and would certainly relate to the now often talked about "preprogramming" that is involved in creolisation. Mühlhäusler does not claim to have proved his case, and it seems to me that there are many more questions to answer. For instance, if Tok Pisin did not start using the plural -s marker until recently because the language was not sufficiently well "advanced" to allow suffixation as a morphological process, as he suggests, then what were the significant morphological differences between the Tok Pisin of today and the Tok Pisin of fifty or sixty years ago when the suffix -im was acceptable but the suffix -s was not?

In the contribution by Wurm (pp.87-109), it is pointed out that there is a danger in applying the traditional comparative method in an area where borrowing between languages, not only of basic vocabulary, but also grammatical forms and constructions, is rampant. He then summarises the situations in a number of languages that have in the past been regarded as "ambiguous" as to whether

they are Austronesian or non-Austronesian. Perhaps inevitably, the discussion ends up yet again with a detailed discussion on the still unresolved Reef and Santa Cruz controversy. I might have found the discussion more valuable if there were some new twists to the argument, or dramatic new evidence that came to light.

Mosel's paper (pp.155-172) provides a detailed discussion of the emergence of a written standard in the Tolai language. She points out some of the dangers inherent in the present anti-vernacular education policy practised in much of Melanesia, and lays some of the blame for current problems in Melanesia relating to language on the past policy of the missions towards the language. Although she is talking about Tolai, many of her points have pan-Melanesian validity, and although linguists and some educators have been making the same points for years, there has to date been no completely satisfactory rebuttal by policy makers to account for their lack of action in this area.

Tryon (pp.197-214) provides a useful list of languages with the numbers of speakers of each, in Solomon Islands. He presents us with a summary of the results of a detailed lexicostatistical comparison of all of these languages - a kind of sequel to Tryon (1976). Given what Wurm said in his earlier warning about the extreme tendency of Oceanic languages to borrow vocabulary and structures, one wonders whether this effort might not be to some extent in vain. Of interest, however, is a summary of phonological innovations (presumably with the offending loanwords carefully filtered out from inherited vocabulary), that offers support for some of his lexicostatistically derived subgroups. The same warning against relying too heavily on lexicostatistical data for subgrouping, incidentally, comes up also in Zorc's paper (pp.305-320).

Lynch's paper (pp.215-235) is a salvage study of Ura, in Vanuatu. It does not claim to be anything but a last minute sketch of a moribund language, one of a small number of such languages

among the 105 that are spoken in Vanuatu. The total lexicon that could be resuscitated was only about 350 words. It would probably be interesting to compare this list with the list in Tsuchida's (pp.453-477) of vocabulary rescued from the dying Papora language of Taiwan, to see if anything can be said about how languages die. There is also plentiful raw material for ghouls in the literature of Australian linguistics with which to compare these lists, should anyone want to get involved in the phenomenon of language death (which presumably has some significant contribution to make to the field of psycholinguistics).

Alisjahbana (pp.391-320) provides a useful discussion of language standardisation and the concept of modernisation, that should be of interest not only to other Asian countries apart from Indonesia, but also to the many small, newly emerged Pacific nations.

It would be awfully tedious in a review of a Festschrift to cover every single article individually. I have chosen to discuss only some of the total number in this volume. The choice was made more on personal grounds rather than academic grounds, in that I chose to concentrate on papers that related more to my own area of specialisation. Overall, however, the articles are of good quality, their breadth and depth being a suitable honour to Hans Kähler. I do have one final criticism however, about the binding. After a short period of use, the cover of my copy has started to come adrift.

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