

P. Mühlhäusler et al *Papers in pidgin and creole linguistics* No.2. *Pacific Linguistics*, A-57, 1979, x+290pp.

Reviewed by Terry Crowley

University of Papua New Guinea

Pidgin and creole studies continue to enter further into the mainstream of theoretical and descriptive linguistics. *Pacific Linguistics* has now put out the second of its *Papers in pidgin and creole linguistics* (the first appeared in 1978). It is good to see that pidgin/creole scholars specialising in Pacific and Asian pidgins and creoles have an apparently continuing medium for publication. Hopefully the *Papers* will continue well beyond No.2.

This volume contains thirteen articles, covering different aspects of the pidgin/creole picture in the Pacific and Asian area. There are papers by Mühlhäusler, Lattey, Woolford, Camden, Steffensen, Peet and Mosel dealing with various types of Pacific English-based pidgins and creoles; by Smith on a Portuguese-based creole of Sri Lanka; by Liem on a French-based pidgin of Vietnam; by de Dios on a Spanish-based creole of the Philippines; by Dreyfess and Oka on an Indonesian-based pidgin, and by Clyne and Gebhard on the different marginal pidgin situations of European migrants in Australia, and of Thai dependents on an American base in Thailand.

Perhaps because of the fact that pidgin/creole studies have only been accepted as being academically respectable fairly recently, and also perhaps because of the nature of the subject itself, there is considerable confusion and disagreement among scholars about even the apparently most fundamental concepts and issues. The papers in this volume represent a wide range of views on what 'pidgins' and 'creoles' really are. In Woolford's article "Variation and change in the *i* 'predicate marker' of New Guinea Tok Pisin", the writer takes the view that pidginisation and creolisation are not fundamentally different from other types of language change, except perhaps in the rate at which the changes take place (p.45). On the other hand, there are papers that concentrate on the 'specialness' of pidgins and creoles, though attempting to revise the basic definitions of these terms as suggested by the data they are familiar with. For instance, in

Dreyfuss and Oka's "Chinese Indonesian" a new kind of language hybrid?" it is suggested that morphological simplicity, a widely accepted defining characteristic of pidgins and creoles, is not a necessary feature of such languages, and that the definition of these terms must accordingly be revised.

A lot of the papers in this volume provide sufficient well organised and well presented data that can be interpreted and used whatever the scholar's own particular views. So, while in Smith's article "Substrata vs. universals in the formation of Sri Lanka Portuguese" there is strong argumentation against the 'universalist' point of view in pidgin and creole structure, there is still an interesting range of data on a little-known Portuguese-based creole that any pidgin/creole specialist with 'universalist' tendencies could (and should) look at.

The subject matter of the articles varies from long-established creole and post-creole situations to more transient and marginal language forms such as the unstable Thai-English of American bases in Thailand and the Vietnamese French-based pidgin of Vietnam in the 1940s and 1950s. Clyne's "German and English working pidgins" seems to fit into this category also, though I find the article a little disappointing in that the term 'pidgin' is consistently used where others would not (cf. Gebhard's "Thai adaptation of English language features: a study of Thai-English"). The writer seems to be describing what others might regard as highly variable, fairly unsystematic, learner's 'interlanguage', or at best as an incipient pidgin/jargon.

I have tried to emphasise the wide range of points of view expressed in this publication and the large amount of data that would otherwise be hard to find. This book is, therefore, a valuable contribution to pidgin/creole studies.