

Tom Dutton, **Police Motu: Iena Sivarai (Its Story)**. Port Moresby: The University of Papua New Guinea Press, 1985. xvi + 297 pp.

*Reviewed by John M. Clifton, Summer Institute of
Linguistics and University of North Dakota*

Police Motu, or Hiri Motu as it is currently called, is one of the national languages of Papua New Guinea. It is one of the few pidgins based on a non-European language. This fascinating book on the development of Police Motu is especially interesting since, as noted in the preface, there is little in the way of written materials available for use in studying the earlier stages of Police Motu. To supplement the few materials that are available, Dutton has made extensive use of interviews with many of the people who lived through the development of the language. Although many of the ideas presented in the book have been developed by Dutton in previous articles in a variety of sources, this book represents a welcome integrated social and linguistic history of the language.

Chapter 1, 'The Language Today,' presents an overview of the structure of Hiri Motu. The chapter covers the distribution and dialectal variation in Hiri Motu, a brief introduction to the most conspicuous features of the grammar, and the differences between Hiri Motu and Motu which result in Hiri Motu being considered a pidgin. This last part of the chapter compares aspects of the phonological, syntactic, and lexical systems of Hiri Motu and Motu. There are numerous examples in the chapter to give the reader a feel for the structure of Hiri Motu.

Chapters 2 through 6 deal with the historical development of Police Motu. Chapter 2, 'In the Beginning: The Pre-European Setting,' is perhaps the most controversial, as Dutton argues that Police Motu did not develop from the trading language used by the Motuans on their annual *hiri* expeditions. Instead, he claims that on these expeditions the Motuans used two pidgins based on the languages of their major trading partners, the Eleman and the Koriki. Once again, extensive examples are given comparing the two pidgins with the languages on which they are based, and the features that make these languages pidgins are listed. In the final part of chapter 2 Dutton describes 'simplified Motu', a form of Motu used by

the Motuans in their early contact with Europeans and possibly in the pre-European contact period between the Motuans and neighbouring language groups. Dutton provides evidence this simplified Motu is probably the language which developed into Police Motu.

Chapter 3, 'Invasion and the New Frontier: Simplified Motu to Police Motu,' traces the development of Police Motu as it was used by early missionaries and visitors, as well as by government officials before Papua became a British colony. Chapter 4, 'Law and Order: The Spread of Police Motu,' then traces the spread of Police Motu throughout Papua as a result of the development of the Armed Native Constabulary, the village constable system, and the prison system. Chapter 5, 'Economic and Other Development: Consolidation and Complication,' deals with the spread of Police Motu as a result of movement of labour from one division to another during the period from 1898 to World War II. These three chapters outline various reasons Police Motu became the language of administration instead of a 'broken' English as was in use in the Torres Strait.

The first half of chapter 6, 'The War and After: Recognition, Name Change, National Identity and the Future,' deals with the effects of the war on the strengthening of Police Motu politically, as well as on raising awareness among Papuans of Tok Pisin and 'proper' English. The last half of the chapter discusses the political impact of Police (later Hiri) Motu after the war. In the final chapter, 'Some Concluding Remarks,' Dutton makes some general observations about the relationship between Police Motu and 'broken' English.

In addition to this historical sketch of Police Motu, the book includes thirteen appendices. These include, among other things, an outline history of outside contact with Papuans from 1606 to 1942; a comparison of Hiri Motu with possible source languages; thumbnail sketches of all foreigners who visited the Port Moresby area between 1870 and 1890; the history of administrative divisions and districts, and government stations, from 1884 to 1930; and reports of movements of labourers; as well as other statistics. Along with these, spread throughout the book are nine tables, five figures, nine maps, and 24 plates. To round things out, are an extensive bibliography including primary and secondary sources of information, and a good index. Personally, I have found the data included in these 'extras' well worth the price of the book by themselves for gaining a better feel for the historical

development of Papua. At the same time, their inclusion as appendices does not unduly hamper the reader who is not interested in such 'details.'

One of the strengths of the book, as may be apparent by now, is the integration of the discussion of the development of Police Motu with its social setting. Dutton has done a remarkable job of relating missions, government, and economics to the development of Police Motu at any given time. The only complaint I have about the book is that position of Hiri Motu in modern history seems to have been slighted. Less than one page is devoted to the place of Hiri Motu in the Papua Besena, or Papuan Separatist Movement, and there is very little on the current status of Hiri Motu vis á vis English. These can be seen as possible weaknesses, however, only in comparison with the excellent coverage of sociolinguistic factors in the rest of the book.

As noted in the preface, for the most part the book is written in a style that should make it accessible to the layman, although it includes enough detail to be of interest to the specialist. The first two chapters contain a few linguistic terms such as bound and free pronouns, transitive verbs, alienable and inalienable nouns, postpositions, conjoining and embedding, and stative verbs. As Dutton notes, the technical nature of these sections probably necessitates the use of technical terms. Even here, however, the examples given will probably make the sense of the terms clear. In the rest of the book Dutton is able to keep clear of technical jargon.

In summary, this is an excellent account of the development of Hiri Motu. It should be of interest to anyone interested in pidginization processes, sociolinguistic influences on language change, determining the history of unwritten languages, or the history of Papua, in addition to those interested in Hiri Motu. Furthermore, its nontechnical nature makes it appropriate for specialist and layman alike.