



Journal of the Linguistic Society of Papua New Guinea
Vol. 33 No. 2, 2015

Proceedings of the 49th Annual LSPNG Conference
“Promoting Language Education for National Development”
June 15-17, 2015
Port Moresby, PNG

Fossilization of English in PNG

Jillian Thiele
Pacific Adventist University
jthiele@pau.ac.pg

Abstract

Fossilization is when there is a permanent cessation of a person learning a new target language. Certain incorrect forms of the language are fossilized into the person's language production. After a while, these incorrect forms are accepted as correct. There are many reasons why language learners never reach target-like proficiency of the new target language. In Papua New Guinea, there are many examples of fossilisation in the use of English. These non-standard fossilized forms may emerge due to the transfer of the phonetic sounds of the mother tongue. Fossilization may occur with the lack of syntactic knowledge, therefore, some speakers have difficulty in constructing a correct form of the English sentence. Semantic fossilization is common when words are imported from a local language into English. The most common reason for fossilization is that adequate communication is achieved so there is no motivation to continue learning the various forms of the new language. Changing these commonly accepted forms is very difficult.

1. Background

Why does Selinka (1972) say that only five percent of second language English learners achieve native-like use of their new language? Why as a language teacher in Papua New Guinea (PNG), do many of my students only achieve partial knowledge of English? Long (1997) suggested that even with the right motivation and ample learning opportunities, most learners never achieve full proficiency in the target language. Language learners are prone to aspect of language fossilization.

1.1. Interlanguage

According to Corder (1971), language learners are continually approximating their new language, usually in comparison to their mother tongue. This process is part of a continuum of language learning, commonly referred to as 'a stage of their interlanguage'. In essence, this means that the knowledge of the rules and structure of the target language is continually evolving to become closer to knowledge of the target language. Along this continuum of language learning, there are often temporary restricting phrases, as new information is processed and practiced. When there is a permanent cessation of the learning progress, then the interlanguage is no longer part of a continuum but the end point. This linguistic phenomenon is known as fossilization (Selinker, 1972).

2. Fossilization

There may be many attempts to stimulate the continual learning process. The term 'fossilization' was created to provide the sense of entrenching and permanence of incorrect

application of grammatical rules, spelling, and even issues of pronunciation. Even though this term is strongly debated, it will be used in this essay to refer to the process in which incorrect forms of the target language become a habit and cannot easily be corrected. It appears that the target language is 'set in stone' (Han, 2003). It is the 'stopping short' of full competency of the new language. There is a sense of incompleteness (Schachter, 1990). Fossilization is when a learner has notable 'bad speaking or writing habits' and refuse to change these inaccuracies.

Brown (1994) implies that many adult language learners progress from the acculturation stage and begin to progress into adaptation and assimilation stages but fail to progress any further. Brown uses the metaphor of "cryogenation"; the process of freezing matter at very low temperatures; to depict the reversibility of fossilization. Both Selinker (1972) and Ellis (1985) do not see fossilization as quite so reversible, even though it is very difficult for some language learners to progress any further. Selinker and Ellis both say that there is still potential for learning in regards to some superficial aspects, such as vocabulary, but in general, conceptual understanding does not progress. Fossilization, is therefore, a sort of language stagnation that cannot be easily overcome.

Fossilization often means that certain aspects of the language were learnt **incompletely** or incorrectly, such as grammatical features, like conjugating verbs, wrong vocabulary, or sentence structure (Why Does Fossilization Happen?). Maybe, there is a subconscious use of forms originating from mother tongue syntax and/or phonology. The learner subconsciously does not wish to replace the existing forms of the original language for forms in the target language. Why is there complacency in achieving target like proficiency? What are the general reason for language fossilization?

3. Reasons for Fossilization

1. **Critical Period Hypothesis:** It is recognised that pronunciation fluency is not possible beyond a certain age. This is called the critical period hypothesis. It is argued that language fossilization is inevitable within individuals who are learning a new language beyond puberty, especially in terms of cadence and pronunciation. It seems as though the brain loses its plasticity at this critical age to learn new sounds.
2. **Lack of motivation:** Often the lack of motivation to learn a target language has an impact on the level of proficiency. It seems that the lack of learning is due to a lack empathy for the target language (Gardner, 1988; Gardner & Smythe, 1975; Schumann, 1978a; Schumann, 1978b; Corder, 1978; Ushioda, 1993). There are times when the learner does not want to achieve native-like pronunciation as the sound of the new language may 'tag' them as being part of the target culture. Many adult language learners like to maintain their own cultural and ethnic identity. Many learners may not have a strong integrative motivation toward the target culture and so many consciously

or unconsciously seek to maintain their distinctive accent (Guiora, Beit-Hallahmi, & Brannon, 1972).

- 3. Language Situation of the Language Learner:** Fossilization can occur when there is language transfer from mother tongue to the target language. The most common is the interference of the sound system of the mother tongue with the sound system of the target language. This can lead to incorrect pronunciation of words and expressions. Some words may have similar sounds but have different meaning. Learning these difference is an important aspect of language learning.

4. Inadequate learning environment

4.1 Academic exercise

Fossilization is often contributed to an inadequate learning environment. In a classroom, where the target language is regarded as an academic task, with little impact on life, many language learners cannot see the long term benefits of learning the new target language. In many cases students learn enough of the target language to pass the final exams, but do not aim to achieve proficiency levels so they can communicate with people of the target language.

4.2 Lack of corrective feedback

Sometimes fossilization occurs when the learners receive little corrective feedback from the instructor. Maybe, the instructor is not sufficiently competent to provide the necessary feedback. Even when errors are noticed by the instructor, the instructor may not be familiar with the correct form.

4.3 Exposure to Faculty Examples

In some language classrooms, learners are exposed to faculty examples of the target language. Without realising the situation, the learners learn false aspects of the target language. These faculty examples may come from the instructor, the learning environment or external environment where faculty examples are seen and heard by the students.

4.4 Communication is achieved

One of the most common reasons why language fossilization occurs is that learners feel that they have met their communication needs. They are understood so they is no need to endear the difficult task of learning more rules. In a colloquial sense, there is a sense that “I can get by so why bother; people know what I am trying to say.” If there is no pressure or value to achieve accuracy, then fossilization is a logical step.

5. Types of Fossilization

There are many different forms of language fossilization:

- 1. Morphological fossilization:** This type of fossilization is to do patterns of word formation, including inflection, derivation and composition. For example, the adding of suffixes or prefixes can affect the pronunciation of the word.

2. **Syntactic fossilization:** This type of fossilization is to do patterns of formation of sentences and phrases. For example, Chinese language does not have tense, thus, causing an issue with learning English (Wei 2008).
3. **Semantic fossilization:** This type of fossilization refers to the systematic study of the meanings of words, the changes of meanings and how word use changes under certain circumstances.
4. **Pragmatic fossilization:** This type of fossilization occurs when the way people use an expression has a different means from the mother tongue to English, the target language. It is examining the language from its historical roots and then notices the changes of language use.
5. **Phonological fossilization:** This type of fossilization relates to speech sounds and how particular sounds are pronounced. Charles Fries (1945) states that with learning a new language, the chief problem is not the learning vocabulary items, but the mastery of sound system-to understand the stream of speech, to hear the distinctive sound features and to approximate their reproduction. Elliot (1995) implies that pronunciation is more difficult to improve than other target language skills. Scovel (1967) also believes that phonological fossilization will plague the second language learner.

Summary of Section: Fossilization refers to the process of the continued use of incorrect forms of a language. There is limited motivation to change from using the incorrect forms. This language learning stagnation is not easy to overcome. There may be some strategies to stimulate the continual learning process.

6. Language Situation in Papua New Guinea

6.1 Tiers of Languages in Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea has tiers of languages. The bottom tier, the village situation, is where there is the majority of languages. They are known as Tok Ples languages and are connected to various clans and tribes throughout the country. Some of these language groups may have a few speakers and others thousands. Tok Ples languages are numbered at over 700, making it the most linguistically diverse country in the world (Lynch, 1998, pg.25). These languages exhibit a wide variety in also all areas of linguistics: suprasegmentals, stress, and tones (Cahill, 2011).

When Papua New Guinea became an independent state in 1975, the administrators struggled to unify and amalgamate the diverse mixture of hundreds of diverse cultural, ethnic groups and their related Tok Ples languages. Due to the cultural diversity of the population, communication was difficult. There was a great potential for miscommunication.

The middle tier relates to two official national languages, Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu. Tok Pisin, an English-based creole is the most widely spoken, serving as the country's lingua franca. Tok Pisin originated as a trade language, and descended from jargon spoken across the Pacific by English speaker European traders, plantation owners and ships' crews as they traded with the

local Pacific Island residents. This Neo-Melanesian pidgin spread and expanded as trade increased and colonisation became established. Gradually, this new hybrid of a language became accepted as the common language of communication between all the diverse languages represented in the sugar, pineapple, coconut and cocoa plantations of Queensland, Samoa, New Guinea and Fiji. Tok Pisin became a means of communicating between the local people and the European colonizers. Tok Pisin has become very popular and spread from the New Guinea islands, to the highlands and now to the coastal areas, where Hiri Motu was the traditional lingua franca (McArthur, 1992, p, 471). Tok Pisin is now the most commonly spoken language in PNG.

Hiri Motu originated around the Port Moresby district and expanded along the Papuan Coast through Motuan people being involved with *hiri* trading expeditions. Police Motu, was a simplified version of the language used by the colonial police force. This language is still used by many Motuans living in the Papuan region.

Most people acquire either Tok Pisin or Hiri Motu as their common ‘market place’ language. Most people also acquire their local language, their Tok Ples language from their family, relatives (wantoks), and village community. By the time most children attend school they are proficient in Tok Pisin and their Tok Ples language and have some comprehension of various other Tok Ples languages around their district.

The top tier is English. This is the official international language of government, overseas politics, education, business and the legal system, but it is not widely spoken by the general populous. The new government of independent PNG struggled to find a way to unify and amalgamate the diverse culture groups. It was decided that English would be used as an international language and medium of education. It was expected that people would continue to use a mixture of their traditional Tok Ples languages and one of the one national languages, Tok Pisin or Hiri Motu. English is not the general medium of communication in the community but is used by teachers and students at school. Arriving at most schools, children are confronted with a new totally unfamiliar language; the language of the ‘white people’ and the media. It is very much ‘sink or swim’ when the children arrive at school.

6.2 Literacy Issues in PNG

The problem is that many people in PNG are illiterate. Even with the encouragement to learn English at school, much of the population is illiterate. The Papua New Guinea 2050 Vision Statement says PNG’s youth literacy rate is less than 64% and numeracy standards are also poor. Most of these statistics were obtained from rural areas. Children were not attending school. Even when student had access to schools, the provision of education was substandard. Under-training of teachers and the poor quality curriculum resulted in low standards of numeracy and literacy. In addition, many students who did attend school became they felt alienated from their own culture.

7. Language Education in PNG

7.1 History of Language Teaching in PNG

Tracing language teaching in PNG reflects the changes of thought around the world. From 1960s to the 1990s, language teaching and the related language policies in PNG, were continually changing. The colonial government of the 1960s believed that English was the means to making PNG into a nation (Litteral, 1999a, p. 1). As a result, many mission schools abandoned Tok Ples language instruction in favour to English. The 1960s and 1970s saw the introduction of 'A' schools for expatriates and 'T' schools for PNG children, where English was strongly encouraged. At independence, at 1975, the issue of bilingual education was raised again. By the 1980s, the emphasis was on improving English language education. By the 1990s the discussion returned to bilingual education, structural change and the incorporating of recommendations made by the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

7.2 Debates on Bilingual Education

The changes led to debates regarding bilingual education. The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) led many of the discussions at numerous academic conferences promoting the academic value of teaching Tok Ples languages before the introduction of English. To add more fuel to the discussion, Professor Tom Dutton, of the University of PNG, recommended introducing Tok Pisin as the national language of education (Litteral, 1999a, 2), rather than English. There was much talk but no definite decision.

By the 1980s education practice become decentralised to each of the provinces. Some educator in some provinces believed the introduction of Tok Ples education would provide two major benefits for their provinces. It was believed that the introduction of a child's mother tongue assists in the learning English. Secondly, knowledge of Tok Ples languages would assist in cultivating a strong connection to the area. These ideas led the North Solomons, East New Britain and Enga provinces to introduce vernacular preschools. This concept of vernacular schools was rejected by Parliament in 1986, but by 1989, Parliament funds were allocated for vernacular language and literacy programs. By 1990, Parliament recommendation the introduction of village based three year vernacular elementary education (Paraide, 2014). This was perceived as a win by many, especially the linguistics of SIL. The Elementary Village Schools were encouraged to teach in the medium of the local village language, the Tok Ples of the surrounding area. Children, from age five to seven, were encouraged to attend these schools before attending Primary schools where instruction is first in Tok Pisin before English is introduced as a second language and then the medium of instruction (Owens & Matang, 2013). Research results from elementary schools was very positive (Paraide, 2014). The problem was that most of the citizens believed the Tok Ples language, taught in the Elementary Schools was the cause of the lowering of primary and high school academic results. The results of the research never seemed to be understood by the populous of the country. Due to political pressure, the decision of bilingual education was reversed by the O'Neil government in 2013. It is recommended that English is taught from the first year of school, even though SIL statistics

demonstrate this is not an effective way of teaching languages (Litteral, 1999b, p. 6). The majority of the population was happy with this decision.

7.3 Language Teaching Methods

When the country's literacy rates are low and there is continual murmuring in the local newspapers about the standard of English in the country, the discussion logically turns to blaming the language teachers. Various international Embassies and the Volunteer Services International (VSO) have organised language teacher educational programs around the country in an effort to improve language teaching.

It has been discovered that teachers tend to concentrate on teaching rules and linguistic processes of English. For many years, English as a Second Language was taught by the prescriptive method. The problem with this teaching method is that many students feel threatened, confused and demoralised because they had difficulty in accomplishing good levels of English. Very little consideration is given to how the phonetic language of the student's mother tongue can affect structure, word meaning and pronunciation of the new language. Very little consideration is given to code switching and semantic transfers.

Universities (Thiele, 2014) and VSO tend to use the descriptive method of teaching; the use of sociolinguistics, as a means to connect the language within the PNG society. This methods studies how language is used in a variety of language situations. Understanding how language is altered as a result of cultural norms, social expectations, political factors, ethnicity, status, gender, level of education, age, geographical location and socioeconomic classes, are all mentioned in class. Identifying, analysing and describing grammatical, phonological, semantic and language patterns with the student's mother tongue with English, highlights the difficulties but also provides a way forward. These variations are not described as wrong or right, but how they are differ from each other.

Students who learn a target language by understanding the differences and similarities between their own Tok Ples language and English seem to become more proficient at learning English. The descriptive method of teaching focuses on describing the linguistic situation in a supportive environment. Effective language teaching methods is not just the teaching of language skills and structures but explaining the reasons why certain languages constructions and issues occur.

8. Language learning

8.1 Language learning is influenced by the learning process

In PNG, the discussion of linguistic competence and communication continues. The language learning process is a mixture of factors; situational issues, language input, learner differences, learner learning processes and opportunities for linguistic output (Ellis (1985). The lack of any one of these factors can lead to language confusion and a consequence of a delay in learning. Linguistic variability between the student, the peers and the teacher can lead to miscomprehension and language confusion (Wardhaugh, 1998, 204). If the teacher is not

aware of this context and is not aware of linguistic hurdles faced by the students, the education process is distorted (Jones, 2003, 118).

8.2 Language Learning needs the right kind of Motivation

Motivation is a strong indicator of the effectiveness of learning a new language. For many students, the learning of English is for pure utilitarian value (Shirbagi, 2010, 2). Motivation related to language learning is a complex set of variables including effort; desire to achieve goals, as well as attitudes toward the learning of the language. In addition, he remarked that individuals' motivation for second language learning also includes their motivation orientations, interest, attitudes toward second language group or learning situations and anxiety. In Papua New Guinea, secondary schools have adopted English as the medium of instruction. Many of these students learning English are not motivated to learn the elaborate rules of English. This may be due to the fact that many of their parents and relatives, who in the past, struggled to learn competent English, but did not find well-paying jobs. There is not a much incentive to struggle with learning competent English when there are limited employment opportunities and in most situations, the rudiments of English are enough to communicate. There needs to be positive motivation to learn English, otherwise, the English lesson become a pure academic process.

8.3 Factors that can promote language fossilisation in the PNG Context

In PNG, there are many examples of fossilization in PNG. The reasons for this process are very diverse:

8.3.1. Influence of the complex sociolinguistic environment: In multilingual societies, communication is embedded within a sociolinguistic environment (Fondacaro & Higgins, 1985, 77). Even if the written form of a language is often regarded as standard (Chafe, 1985, 107), the continual exposure to oral forms of incorrect English gradually becomes embedded in the subconscious. In PNG, many billboards display messages using incorrect forms of English. Usually an English syntax has been simplified and applied generally. These incorrect forms are often accepted as the correct, as the uneducated majority are unfamiliar with the proper forms of grammar. These incorrect forms become entrenched and fossilised into the linguistic framework.

The Staff of our company wish you a Mery Christmas.

Do not park in the lawn.

Pig on sale (pig for sale)

All the youths came to church.

Students know that the English language is just one part of a broad complicated social context. People communicate for mutual intelligibility. The communication process enables people to convey feelings and facts with each other, to react and comment, to agree or disagree, to accept or to reject (Tisdell, 1998: 134). Language is for communication. Language use and speech patterns are adopted by a speaker may change depending upon the social context; urban versus rural areas; in bilingual versus

monolingual areas; within different socio-economic groups; among various occupations; and, influenced by the looseness or tightness of a social network. Most people living in rural areas of PNG, tend to lack facilities that promote correct forms of English. They may not have access to a nurse who speaks English; access to schools that use the correct form of English as the medium of education; access to properly trained English teachers; or even access to international and national English forms of the media. The lack of isolation from exposure to correct forms of English easily lead to fossilization. Non-standard forms have become accepted as correct.

*I ain't done nothing.
I done it yesterday.
It weren't me that done it
I argue for our own betterment.*

In most multilingual societies, such as PNG, the goal is effective communication. This produced a 'near enough and 'intelligibility' focus.

8.3.2. Influence of the learning process

Linguistic competence and communication is a mixture of factors; situational issues, language input, learner differences, learner learning processes and opportunities for linguistic output (Ellis (1985). The lack of any one of these factors can lead to language confusion and a consequence of a delay in learning. Linguistic variability between the student, the peers and the teacher can lead to miscomprehension and language confusion (Wardhaugh, 1998, 204). If the teacher is not aware of this context and is not aware of linguistic hurdles faced by the students, the education process is distorted (Jones, 2003, 118).

Some words are accepted as correct by the majority of the society.

*Living for Leaving
Live for life*

In reference to fossilization, many language learners tend to simplify the rules. This may account why so many PNG English speakers fail to comprehend how the use of suffixes can change the way the word is pronounced. Many times the teacher is not aware either.

*Replyment
Repairation
Irresponsibleness*

8.3.3. Influence of language policies and curriculum documents

Language policies are generally formulated in order to fulfil the language needs of a society. Language policies identify language priority and how the needs of language learners can best be met through appropriate teaching methods and models (Lo Bianco, 1987). It is interesting that in PNG, the English syllabus states, "This syllabus ... is

aimed at fostering deeper understanding of both the English language and the students' vernacular and through this understanding, the many Papua New Guinean culture and contemporary issues that the reform principles are based on. ... English will be learnt in relations to students' society, local and global cultures and the influences that direct the course of these changes (*English: Lower Secondary Syllabus*, 2007, iv). Learning English is regarded by most citizens of PNG as important, because it is the medium of national and global communication. It is the language for international communication, business and politics. The aim of the English syllabus is, therefore, to promote functionally literacy in English. In reality, this is not happening.

8.3.4. Influence of morphological factors

Morphological fossilization is to do word formation. For example, the adding of suffixes or prefixes can affect the pronunciation of the word. Many of the traditional Tok Ples languages have different vowel sounds. Therefore, pronouncing an English word can sound very different when pronounced in PNG.

Replyment
Repairation
Irresponsibleness

PNG Pronunciation: Ad-var-tise-ment: Standard Pronunciation: Ad-vert-is-ment

PNG Pronunciation: Det-er-mine: Standard Pronunciation: De-ter-mine

PNG Pronunciation: Int-e-grt-ty: Standard Pronunciation: In-teg-ri-ty

8.3.5. Influence of Syntactic factors

Syntactical fossilization involves the incorrect sentence formation. This may related to the use of tenses, the proper use of articles, passive or active voice of sentence construction, or even the length of the sentence. Many of these issues arise from the transfer of their Tok Ples language.

8.3.5.1 Tenses

The use of the correct form of tense in English, is difficult for many PNG speakers. Smith (1986, 145) says many PNG English speakers often “forgo the deletion of the final dental-alveolar stop, thereby, avoiding the articulation of the *-ed* sound at the end of the past tense. Holzhecht and Smithies (1980, 3) also found this consonant cluster avoidance in many English speakers in PNG. Butler-Tanaka (2000) calls this process, overgeneralisation. This may be use the lack of correlation with tense formation in many of the Tok Ples languages.

I *came* and *work*.
How *comes*, we cannot get money.
I *needs* to run for Parliament.
By the time he *reach* his house, everyone was *went*.
This exercise *been done*.
He *pass* the shop on the way here.

He always *encourage* us.

8.3.5.2 Articles

There is often difficulty with definite and indefinite articles.

I need *a* flour to cook with.
Some fruits are growing in the garden.
Some informations is at my office.
 I want to go toshops.

8.3.5.3 Non Count Nouns

For example, many Papua New Guineans pluralise non-count collective nouns, as is common in many of the local indigenous languages. This phenomenon is also reflected in language use of other developing countries.

My pastor gave me many *advices*.
 The *stationeries* are in the vehicle.
 Please pack up all the *furnitures*.
 All the *staffs* wish you a happy Christmas.
 Don't forget to finish your *homeworks*.
 Foot *washings* is downstairs.
 Please carry the *luggages*.
 Take off your *footwares* before entering the library.
 Come and visit our newly displayed *homewares*.
 The *fruits* are on the table.

8.3.5.4 Difference between the nominative and objective

Many times students do not understand the different pronouns that are used for the subject or the object in a sentence. This lack of knowledge results in incorrect use of many of the pronouns. The use of *I* and *me* continues confuse people

Me pray. Standard English. I will pray.

8.3.5.5 Articles

Many students guess when to use articles. This implies that worldview determines the shape of the surface cultures: This implies that *the* [added] worldview determines the shape of the surface cultures.

It calls Christians to new and radical way of thinking;

vs

It calls Christians to *a* [added] new and radical way of thinking
 but also is relevant to the PNG context.;

vs

but also is relevant to *the* [added] PNG context.

8.3.5.6 *Prepositions*

English has far more prepositions that either Tok Pisin or any of the variety of Tok Ples languages. As a result, the wrong preposition is used.

Do not park at lawn. vs Do not park on the lawn.

Community is encompassed *of* a number of kinship groups:

vs

Community is encompassed with a number of kinship groups.

These values are often expressed during special occasions, such as at weddings, funerals, paying pride price, settling conflicts, ethnic clashes or *in* any other big occasions:

vs

These values are often expressed during special occasions, such as at weddings, funerals, paying pride price, settling conflicts, ethnic clashes or at any other big occasions.

going to care *for* that person vs. going to care of that person.

It was only allowed *to* private revenge which is due to the hardness of a person's heart:

vs

It was only allowed as private revenge which is due to the hardness of a person's heart.

money or wealth becomes the main focus *in* compensation ;

vs

money or wealth becomes the main focus of compensation
but also is relevant to the PNG context.;

vs

but also is relevant to *the* [added] PNG context.

8.3.5.7 *Sentence Length*

Maybe, because many of the traditional cultures appreciate great orators, many of the speeches include long and converyluted sentences.

Thus from the finding in chapter four and literature reviewed in chapter five, the involvement of churches including the SDA in development will be discussed forthwith.. The discussion is delimited to the following; First in section 5.2 discussion will be made on the past and current development stage in Hela in relation to the contribution of the Churches especially the SDA Church. This will be followed by a discussion on the impact of the PNG LNG Project in Hela especially its effect on the mission of the Christian church in section

8.4. Influence of Semantic factors

Change of word use can be caused by many different factors. It may be the lack of knowledge. Code switching is the most common reason.

9.1 *Lack of knowledge*

I am studying for my carer. (*career*)

Youths for Youth

Believe for Beliefs

Close for Closed

10. Code Switching

Word use is often involves code switching. This may because they do not have access to the correct English word, so code switching to compensate for the lack of knowledge in that language. The geographic isolation from standard forms of English and the sense of a cultural language identity promotes code switching use from a local Tok Ples or Tok Pisin to English. Nouns, rather than function words, are more easily transferred from one language to another (Baeten Beardsmore, 1986: 57), especially if the speaker and listener are familiar with both languages. This code switching demonstrates cultural loyalty (Baker, 1992, 77). Code switching may occur when the speaker cannot remember the correct word to use so uses a word from the language both people understand, just to keep the conversation progressing. In PNG, code switching is so common that the borrowed word is accepted as the correct form of English.

John is *aftering* you.
Stop *finishing* the coffee.
The faculty *have* to stop the students from *oralling*.
The *replyment* for the invitation is on your desk.
Sometimes word use assumes cultural knowledge to a specific referent.
Is it *pay fortnight* this week?
The *sick* is bad.
The *cabbage* (means all green vegetables) is for sale.

As with all alternate forms of English, there are common idiomatic expressions.

The *blue flies* are on campus.
That car is *bagarap*.
The *raskols* robbed my house last night.
I had many *wantoks* visit during the funeral.
So many people came the *house cry*.
That man has *six months weight*. Looks like a women who is six months pregnant.

11. Influence of Phonological factors

This type of fossilization relates to speech sounds and how particular sounds are pronounced. Language learning involves the learning of a new phonetic language. Confusion with the mother tongue, and its matching phonetic language and its related vocabulary, can create interference with a new language. The pronunciation of this borrowed word then has a flow-on effect by changing the pronunciation of the whole sentence. This borrowing is evident with the issue of word stress.

The word *research* is acceptable while many others say *research*.
This is also true with *distribute* and *distribute*.
Det er mine = de ter mine

In the Pacific islands, *research* and *distribute* are the common forms, where the first syllable is stressed. Sometimes, students are aware of phoneme shifts that occur from the mother tongue but are not aware of how this process changes their pronunciation patterns. Teaching students to be aware of these common phonetic changes is a helpful exercise to avoid fossilisation of incorrect forms.

the shift from *s* to *sh* as in *sip* instead of *sheep or ship*;

the *f* to *p* shift as in *pater* instead of *father*;

l to *r* shift as in *culliculum* instead of *curriculum*

ee to *i* shift as with *sheep* instead of *ship*.

I *ate* (hate) my teacher.

W for a *v* sound

The *wastness* was extensive (vastness)

I went the *Hedda*'s (Heather) wedding.

In PNG, many times the final <ed> is not pronounced or is substituted with a <t>.

Students need to be aware of the lack of correlation between English and their mother tongue. Being aware of the differences is the first step in slowing down the fossilization process.

Conclusion

The evolution of English cannot stop, including the fossilization of incorrect forms of the language. Being aware of the socio linguistic factors that create language fossilization can slow this process. There's a common saying in English, *Practice makes perfect*. It means that if you keep practicing something, you'll become great at it. There's another saying, which is not popular, but explains why fossilization happens. *Practice makes permanent*. Most people agree that "un-learning" something is harder than learning the correct form.

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