

pho-syntax vis-a-vis Proto-Polynesian forms and the numerous present-day Polynesian languages known to him. However, he goes well beyond this and involves the reader in his struggles to make sense of irregularities such as the seeming irrationality of the *o* and *a* form possessives. The reader is taken inside Elbert's world as a privileged spectator as he provides anecdotal evidence of lengthy discussions with his most trusted friends and language consultants. And when we reach the chapter dealing with counting we are made to realise that without the cultural detail provided by Elbert the traditional counting systems would be incomprehensible. Without appearing at all didactic, Elbert demonstrates what he claims in his introduction, namely that there is a symbiotic relationship between culture, folktales and grammar not only in Rennell and Bellona, but universally.

Echo of a Culture is a landmark achievement in Polynesian linguistics. For it goes far beyond a normal description of an Oceanic language in its detail and the comprehensive cultural envelope in which it is presented. It will be appreciated not only by descriptive linguists everywhere but also by Elbert's friends, the people of Rennell and Bellona themselves.

References

Elbert and Monberg. 1965. *From the two canoes: Oral traditions from Rennell and Bellona Islands*. Copenhagen: Danish National Museum.

The Markham languages of Papua New Guinea. By Suzanne Holzknrecht. Pacific Linguistics C-115. Canberra: Australian National University, 1989. vii + 228pp. (incl. 11 maps). AUS\$32.40.

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This work is the published version of Holzknrecht's doctoral thesis submitted to the Australian National University. The book is divided into seven chapters. It also contains an excellent series of maps and an extensive bibliography.

Chapter 1 is an introduction to this work, and presents the conventions used in the presentation of the data. It describes the aims of the study as being to test the genetic relationships of the Markham Valley languages, and their relationships with previously established lower order subgroupings of Oceanic, and to endeavour to reconstruct the history of Markham languages. H attempts to reconstruct the history of the Markham languages by using the standard comparative method. She also proposes to use further linguistic, social and geographical information as evidence for reconstructing forms. Chapter 1.3 gives a good summary of the special characters used.

Chapter 2 deals with earlier descriptions of the Markham languages, and with the methodology used in this work. H criticises the comment of Schmitz (1960:413) that the dialects of the Markham Valley have "always been suspected as belonging to an older stratum of the Austronesian family." H also judges the research of Milke (1965) to be incorrect, in that the "evidence" that Adzera belongs to the Gedaged group because of the phonological rule *z > ø is insufficient proof. Hooley is criticised for his use of wordlists which are too short to give good statistical evidence, though H does acknowledge that the work of Hooley and McElhanon (1970) and later publications by Hooley were helpful despite the shortcomings. The work of Ross (1988) is acknowledged as valuable, because of its use of some morphosyntactic data as well as lexicostatistical data. In the estimation of H, while most of these previous studies have been helpful, virtually all have some shortcomings, especially with

respect to Adzera, the language with the highest number of innovations.

In chapter 2 H also describes the methodology she used for her research, which was the standard comparative method. She researched fifteen languages altogether and changed some wordlists in order to fit inland cultures. Most of the data was gathered within the local villages. Where this was not possible informants were contacted in Lae. After doing her own research other comparative wordlists of Proto-Oceanic (POC) were used to establish a Proto-Markham (PMK) sound system. The same procedure was followed for morphosyntactic forms.

Chapter 3 deals mainly with the geography and group movements in the past. It gives an excellent series of maps for the languages researched, and the description of the language boundaries is quite thorough.

Chapter 4 deals with the phonology of the Markham languages. It starts with a short introduction, in which the phonology of each language is charted. Some remarkable features are the contrastive tone found in Labu, and the three-vowel system of Mari, as opposed to the five-vowel system of the other languages. This chapter would be quite helpful to anyone working in the Markham languages, as it gives a good summary of relevant phonemes.

The chapter then deals with the reconstruction of POC phonology, showing two charts of the phonemes: an original version from Grace et al, and a revised version from Ross (1988). A scheme for Proto-Huon-Gulf (PHG) consonants is also given.

Next H deals with the construction of PMK phonology, giving extensive tables of comparison between POC, PHG, PMK and the current Markham languages. The arguments that H presents for her reconstructions of PMK appear to be consistent with the current phonologies of the Markham languages.

Chapter 5 deals with morphosyntax. H points out that the reconstruction of PMK morphosyntax is more complicated than that of PMK phonology, due to the fact that some innovations have originated from borrowings from languages in groups other than the Markham or Huon Gulf groups. For this reason, research is based on classes of morphemes common to all the languages researched: common nouns, personal nouns and their pro-forms, attributive bases, location bases, verb bases, and pronominal forms.

The rest of the chapter is a description of the different classes of morphemes. The charts included in this chapter are very helpful. H describes clearly the relationships between POC and PHG and the current forms in the Markham Valley. H points out that the conclusion of Anttila (1972) that "comparative morphology" is ap-

plied phonology does not hold for Markham languages since these languages have had considerable influence from non-Austronesian (NAN) or Papuan languages.

Chapter 6 deals with the internal unity of the Markham languages. H divides the Markham languages into three groups; Upper Markham, Watut and Lower Markham, and says that each of these groups can be divided further into subgroups. Data from chapter 4 is used to show regular and irregular phonological innovations from POC and PHG, marking the Markham languages as a special family. This development is sketched for each phoneme.

The chapter then discusses the morphosyntactic innovations, using evidence from chapter 5. H sketches a lexical innovation in the use of a small set of generic verbs. This feature is common in Papuan languages, but not in Austronesian (AN) languages, and is probably due to the contact with Papuan language speakers in the vicinity.

The book closes with a clear short history of the Markham languages. A "family tree" model does not work for the Markham languages, because there is reciprocal borrowing between the Markham languages, as well as from neighbouring languages, often not AN ones. H suggests that future studies should not concentrate on the division of AN vs. NAN, but rather on the "culture area" in which common elements and differences are recorded within geographical areas. Borrowing tells us more about the nature of language change.

I found this study quite interesting. Not only are the relationships with POC and PHG clearly described, but also H stresses the importance of geographic features in borrowing from other languages. The study should be read by anyone planning to work in one of the Markham languages. It gives a good summary of phonological and grammatical characteristics of each of the fifteen languages described and points out the importance of language change through intensive cultural contact. The language is clear. The tables are easily understandable for those with a linguistic interest. I would highly recommend the book to workers in Markham and Huon Gulf languages, and for those interested in Austronesian languages.

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Beach-la-Mar to Bislama: The emergence of a national language in Vanuatu. By Terry Crowley. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990. xxi + 422pp. AUS\$120.00

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In *Beach-la-Mar to Bislama* Crowley traces the history and development of Bislama, the English-based pidgin spoken in Vanuatu (formerly the Anglo-French Condominium of the New Hebrides), from its earliest days in the early to mid nineteenth century until ten years after Vanuatu attained independence in 1980. Crowley's book is a major achievement, bringing together a wealth of material culled from a wide range of sources, largely well-known to Pacific specialists, in a convincingly ar-

gued account of the development of the lexicon and morphosyntax of the language.

Crowley begins by stating that he will "attempt to describe who spoke what to whom during different periods of time, and how they spoke it" (p.1). He maintains that "we have to forget what it means to be historical linguists and become instead linguistic historians" (p.33). By and large his efforts are most successful, although his perspective is somewhat narrow in that his experience has been mainly with urban varieties of Bislama. The importance of a thorough study of rural and regional varieties for an understanding of the history and development of the language is widely acknowledged. Until the results of such a study become available it would be a little premature to accept all of Crowley's proposals.

In his first chapter, 'The language and its name,' Crowley gives a somewhat Francophobic account of the colonial days in Vanuatu as he situates Bislama among the English-based pidgins spoken in Melanesia today. He discusses the importance and role of the three pidgin varieties spoken in the region and reconfirms the Portuguese origin of the name Bislama. In setting up his framework for discussing the development of Bislama Crowley maintains that it is difficult to apply Muhlhuusler's categories [he distinguishes four social varieties of Tok Pisin], to individual utterances and speakers as "they do not describe discrete varieties at all" (p.20). Crowley argues, somewhat erroneously, that there is so much movement between rural and urban areas that there is "constant feeding" between the two, and that it is possible to recognise only the ends of a continuum. This may well be the case between the overcrowded small island of Paama, the island where Crowley carried out his major fieldwork, and the capital Vila. However, Crowley has obviously had little ongoing contact with rural Vanuatu—for the lack of "feeding" between, for example, rural Santo or Malekula and Vila is plain to most observers. His opinion that "educated" versus "less educated" is a better categorisation is difficult to accept, for even Crowley admits that "educated" speakers tend to congregate in urban areas, namely Vila, and to a much lesser extent Luganville.

Chapter 2: 'Language contact in the early years: 1265-1865' begins by looking at pre-colonial contact within the south-west Pacific. Crowley discusses the arrival of the first European explorers, and the history of European contact with Vanuatu down through the whaling era and the period of the sea-slug trade to the establishment of the sandalwood trade so well described by Shineberg (1967). He makes a significant contribution to