

Reviews

The Language Game, Papers in Memory of Donald C Laycock. Ed. by Tom Dutton, Malcolm Ross and Darrell Tryon. Pacific Linguistics C-110. Canberra: Australian National University, 1992. xvii + 667pp. AUS\$85.00

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This volume comprises 65 papers, a eulogy, 10 personal memoirs and a personal bibliography, contributed by 77 colleagues and friends of Don Laycock, who died after a short illness aged 52 on 27 December 1988. Don had been associated with the Linguistics Department of the Research School of Pacific Studies at the Australian National University since becoming its first PhD graduate in linguistics in 1962. His research interests ranged widely, and the contents of this book reflect this variety (as his eulogist Michael Sauer summarises them): "sociolinguistics, the description and classification of the languages of Melanesia and Australia, lexicography, language contacts including pidgins and creoles, varieties of English including Australian English, linguistic games, extraterrestrial languages and (to use Don's own phrase) 'all kinds of linguistic oddities'." The range and number of papers is too great to allow a comprehensive treatment in this review, which will rather summarise the scope and

make specific comments on only a selection of the contributions.

About half of the papers relate to descriptive linguistics, and almost half of these relate to PNG, where Laycock's own contributions were considerable. Comrie offers a short but insightful explanation of issues surrounding the classification of the small Piawi family spoken in the Schrader Ranges. Pawley compares Pandanus (= ritually technical) and Ordinary forms of Kalam and makes important observations on the relationship between grammar and lexis. Kulick and Stroud provide a sketch of Taiap (which had 89 speakers in 1987) spoken between the Sepik and Ramu rivers, and Swadling explains the relevance of Laycock's classification of Sepik languages.

Laycock prepared a dictionary of Buin, one of the non-Austronesian languages of Bougainville, and Melk-Koch explains some of the background to this work. Saovana Spriggs describes the development of mother tongue pre-schools (Tokples Preskuls) in the North Solomons province, which by 1988 encompassed 58 programs in 10 language groups. This has been a successful national initiative in PNG, helping to simplify and make relevant the acquisition of literacy, to smooth the transition to English-medium schooling, and to raise awareness of the value of indigenous language diversity in the context of stable multilingualism.

As might be expected, a number of contributions deal with creoles and Tok

Pisin in particular. Siegel illustrates recent developments in the use of Tok Pisin in education in PNG, a factor which has led to a rise in its status. TP's real value lies in the fact that it is an ideal oral medium in a predominantly oral culture. Ross develops one of Laycock's interests with his carefully-researched and detailed 'Sources of Austronesian lexical items in TP.' Verhaar exemplifies varieties of meaning in English in comparison with languages such as TP. Mühlhäusler builds on a collaboration with Laycock and considers the relationship between artificial languages and pidgins, with particular exemplification from Pidgin-German (PNG) and the artificial Kolonial Deutsch.

More than twenty papers deal with other descriptive topics. Wurm details the complex verbal structures of a Solomon Islands language which is Austronesian laid over a Papuan base. Tsunoda explains word-order in questions in Warrungu (Queensland, Australia). Nash's is a Laycock-inspired explanation of direction/orientation terms in Warlpiri (Central Australia) – clockwise, cardinal direction and spiral movement. Mosel is a comprehensive and richly-illustrated study of nominalizations in Samoan, an ergative language. Lynch documents the, so far, inexplicable accretion of initial vowels in a wide range of verbs in Southern Vanuatu languages. Nekitel analyses the forms, uses and development of a whistle-surrogate used in the Abu'-Wam (Arapesh, PNG) language area. While based on lexical tone melodies, the whistled forms represent an independent, and apparently restricted,

code. Shnukal considers Torres Strait Creole's lexical adaptation to the semantic structure of Meriam Mir (the Papuan indigenous language of the eastern Torres Strait islands).

Jones provides a detailed analysis of the metaphors which express emotion in Meko (Austronesian, PNG). He deals specifically with expressions of anger and traces the correlations between semantics, grammar and their sociocultural context (attitudes). On a related theme, McElhanon discusses the conceptual basis of metaphors and idioms, based on a study of PNG languages Selepet and Kâte.

Half a dozen papers deal with aspects of ethno-pornography and taboo language, and almost as many with Australian English. There are further papers on antonymy, borrowing, Elkin's BIITL challenge, less common types of comparative data, dictionary-making, ethno-botany, language learning, language and prehistory, language variation, myths, the origins of the Japanese people, riddles, skeptics, tarot cards, and translation.

Most readers will enjoy most of the papers and are sure to find enlightenment. A number of the contributions build on Laycock's own work or on his collaboration with a contributor. Many present new insights in their field, most are serious and a few are lighter and more entertaining. Out of them all comes a consistent picture of Don Laycock as a superior scholar and a much-loved and sadly-missed friend. The number of the contributors and the keenness with which they participated in the venture

make clear the success of the volume. Linguistics here has a higher purpose, and it is patent that those who knew Don Laycock lament the untimely passing of a very special person.

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Culture Change, Language Change: Case Studies from Melanesia. Ed. by Tom Dutton. Pacific Linguistics C-120. Canberra: Australian National University, 1992. vii + 157 pp. AUS\$29.30.

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Within the ten contributions in this volume a diversity of topics and language situations are covered. Each article opens a new window on the complex interactions between language change and culture change. The only deficiency in the volume is that it does not contain more articles on the hundreds of other languages and topics that have not yet been studied.

One of the most interesting articles is 'Language Shift as Cultural Reproduction' by Don Kulick. This is a study of the exactly eighty-nine speakers of the Taiap language living between the lower Ramu and Sepik rivers. It captures language and culture as they change together and influence one another.

Individualism, which was traditionally tied to femininity in Taiap culture has,

in current culture, become tied with paganism, backwardness, lack of education and the Taiap language; while collectivism, traditionally tied to masculinity, has currently become tied to Christianity, modernity, education and Tok Pisin. The author argues that the present language shift from Taiap to Tok Pisin is caused by the fact that the cultural items currently associated with Tok Pisin are more highly valued than those tied to the vernacular.

Another very interesting article is 'Sociolinguistic Typology and Other Factors Affecting Change in Northwestern New Britain, Papua New Guinea' by William R. Thurston. The author demonstrates that three closely related languages (Lusi, Kove and Kabana) which for many years have functioned as local trade languages, are now losing ground to Tok Pisin. The main reason cited is that the three languages have grown more and more similar lexically and thus have lost the ability to be markers of ethnic distinctiveness between the speakers. Without this ability they have lost most of their value as against Tok Pisin and therefore are in danger of being replaced by it.

Contrasted with these three languages is the neighboring Anêm language. It is a non-Austronesian isolate which has never been used as a language of wider communication and is very seldomly learned by people from the neighboring languages. It is, therefore, a salient marker of ethnic distinctiveness. Due to their linguistic isolation and a number of other factors, Anêm speakers are increasingly showing feelings of linguistic