

LINGUISTIC PATTERNS IN LANGUAGES OF IRIAN JAYA AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA

A Manual for Beginning Field Workers

Preliminary Report

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1.0 Introduction

Languages spoken on the island of New Guinea and the small islands of its coast may be broadly classified as Austronesian (Schmidt, 1900 - 2) and Non-Austronesian (Capell, 1962), the latter encompassing the major grouping posited as the Trans-New Guinea Phylum (McElhanon and Voorhoeve, 1970).

2.0 Notation

In any one geographical area types of linguistic patterns tend to be limited though variation is likely within these. As study of the languages of this island has increased, recurrent patterns have emerged in phonology, morphology, and syntax. Knowledge of such patterns, prior to beginning linguistic fieldwork would enable the research worker to get into his research more quickly, eliminating rediscovery of already established linguistic patterns.

To this end a manual is being prepared, incorporating linguistic patterns that have arisen from the comparison of the work of linguists in both the Indonesian and Papua New Guinean sections of the island. It is hoped that the manual will serve as a guide for linguists beginning field work in Irian Jaya. As more linguistic articles have been published in English, on languages of Papua New Guinea than on those of Irian Jaya and as the author has had access to a large number of unpublished manuscripts of her SIL colleagues in Papua New Guinea, a great number of the examples are being drawn from Papua New Guinean languages. Wherever possible examples are being drawn from Irian Jaya languages. Before publication of the manual the author intends to submit it to linguists who have done considerable field work in Irian Jaya with the request that they suggest patterns unknown to the author.

3.0 Specific Problems

Among phones which may cause problems in articulation and/or analysis are laterals and vibrants. This author in her work as a linguistic consultant in Irian Jaya and Papua New Guinea has noticed the following four general patterns with regard to these:

1. One vibrant phoneme. This may have three allophones, none of which is a lateral, but which may include [d̥] a quickly released stop occurring intervocalically

often contiguous to /i/ as noted in Isirawa (Oguri and Erickson, 1975) or may include a retroflexed alveolar stop [ɖ̣] as in Fasu (Loeweke and May, 1963).

2. One phoneme with alveolar flapped vibrant and flapped lateral in free or conditioned variation.

3. One vibrant and one lateral phoneme each of which may have several conditioned or free variants: in Baruya (Lloyd and Healey, 1970) the flapped vibrant phoneme has two variants--a flapped lateral and a flapped vibrant--whereas the lateral phoneme has no variants.

In the Yessan-Mayo language as reported by Velma Foreman and Helen Martin (1973) the vibrant phoneme has four allophones, the voiced and voiceless trills occurring in free variation with voiced flap medially and especially finally and voiced flap with central vocoid onset occurring utterance initial.

In the Berik language (Westrum and Westrum, 1975) the vibrant phoneme has a trilled and a flapped vibrant allophone freely alternating whereas the lateral phoneme has five allophones, retroflexed semi-vocoid, retroflexed alveolar stop, alveolar lateral, flapped lateral, and velar lateral occurring in conditioned variation.

4. One vibrant and three lateral phonemes. The vibrant may have flap, trill, and stop variants. The lateral phonemes contrasting as to points of articulation (dental, alveolar, and velar) may each have flap, non-flap, fricative, or affricate allophones. Languages of the Wahgi valley in Papua New Guinea have variations of this general pattern. Among these languages is Nii (Stucky and Stucky, 1973).

In many highland languages, there is a dichotomy between "monofocal" and "polyfocal" verb stems, or person affixes. As Young (1964, p. 48) reports for Bena-Bena, "Monofocal and polyfocal are the terms used to describe the phenomenon of focus on the number of the subject.... The stem final vowel varies with tense and with person and number of the subject. It is on the basis of such vowel variation that verb stems are classified...."

Stem Form	Number			Person
	Plural	Dual	Singular	
Monofocal	<u>bu</u> ?ohune	<u>bu</u> ?ochu?ibe	<u>bu</u> ?ohube	1st ego
Polyfocal	<u>bi</u> ?ehabe	<u>bi</u> ?eha?ibe	<u>bu</u> ?ahane	2nd
	<u>bi</u> ?ehabe	<u>bi</u> ?eha?ibe	<u>bu</u> ?ehibe	3rd

"The verb stem is underlined. This arrangement of the verb shows that there is no contrast between the forms of the 2nd and 3rd persons in the dual, nor in the plural.

"The term monofocal describes the phenomenon illustrated by the bu- form of the stem. Monofocal refers, along the vertical axis to singular number for first, second and third persons; and along the horizontal axis, to first person in the singul-

ar, dual, and plural number. This horizontal axis is called the ego axis since it refers to ego participation in the action, i. e.

1st Singular = ego

1st Dual = ego + one other person

1st Plural = ego + more than one person

"The term polyfocal describes the phenomenon illustrated in the bi form, in which the focus is on number rather than person, as demonstrated by the noncontrastiveness (i. e., homophony) between persons in each category." Pike (1963) describes a parallel dichotomy in Fore object prefixes.

Non-Austronesian languages are generally characterized by an independent, dependent verb dichotomy often referred to in Papua New Guinea as "Final" versus "Medial" verbs. In the highlands the system is most highly developed with affixation on the medial verb not only to mark whether the subject of the following clause is the same or a different one but also the person and number of the subject of the following clause. Lowland languages may not be so highly developed in this respect. Isirawa (this volume) dependent verbs do not mark anticipatory same or different subject but differ from independent verbs in their absence of suffixation.

In many languages of this island 1st or 2nd person dual or plural pronouns may form one nucleus of a two nuclei phrase type used to specify the persons referred to by the pronoun. In this type of phrase, called Partitive Noun Phrase by Joyce Sterner in the present volume, the nucleus manifested by a pronoun involves the narrator or hearer and at least one other person. The other nucleus is generally manifested by a noun or noun phrase marked by a morpheme meaning "with" or "also".

In Sobei: Nucleus | plural pronoun + Nucleus | Noun/question word
 Whole | Part

mindai

Herman-ma

we-exclusive-two Herman-also

'Herman and I'

Details of such phonemic, morphemic, and syntactic patterns will be described in the manual using the tagmemic model and geographical or language family distribution will be noted.