# PAPUAN PIDGIN ENGLISH REDISCOVERED

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Pidgin and creole studies is the latest area of linguistics to gain respectability, and growing importance is being attributed to the outcome of studies in this area. This fact does not mean that respectable work has not been carried out in the past, though the task of assessing such work is by no means complete. One thing is certain, however: there is little evidence for the widely held view that pidgin and creole studies is a part of sociolinguistics. In fact, most accounts of these languages are ridden by insufficient consideration of social factors, and very little work has been done within a framework of rigid sociolinguistic methodology.

One of the aims of this study[1] is to take account of recent developments in sociolinguistics, though the very nature of the data has put severe limitations upon it. It is hoped, however, that future findings can be accommodated in the framework provided here.

## 2. ON THE EXISTENCE OF PAPUAN PIDGIN ENGLISH (PPE)

It is widely held, both in the linguistic literature and by laymen,[2] that no such language as PPE was ever spoken in Papua. Not only does this view fail to fit in with our linguistic knowledge of how Pidgin English developed in the South-western Pacific, but it also has serious implications for present-day language policies and language planning in Papua New Guinea. (The social implications will be discussed at the end of this paper.)

It is distressing to find a statement like the following in the writings of a well-known expert on the linguistic situation in Papua New Guinea:



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> In Papua, as against the Territory of New Guinea ... Pidgin had never been introduced. By early Government policy from the days of the first government of British New Guinea right up to very recent times, one native language had been chosen as a means of general intercommunication. (Capell 1969:109)

It is equally distressing to find statements such as the following being made in the recent debate following Professor Dutton's comments on the national language question in Papua New Guinea:[3] "Let it be known that I am a Papuan and that that ridiculous language Pidgin will never be spoken by my tongue, nor the tongues of my people." (*Post-Courier* 10 June 1976).

The view that Pidgin English was never spoken in Papua goes hand in hand with the view that the old Motu Trade Language[4] was made the lingua franca of Papua in the early years of British colonisation and subsequently developed, as its social functions changed in various ways, into Police Motu and present-day Hiri Motu. The myth that Hiri Motu is a direct development from the old Motu Trade Language has been dispelled by Dutton (1977) and Kakare (1976), mainly on linguistic grounds. Thus, the fundamental linguistic differences between the two languages inevitably lead to the conclusion that there must have been some drastic break in the continuity of transmission of earlier and later forms of simplified Motu.

There is sufficient extralinguistic evidence to show that the adoption of simplified Motu as a lingua franca of Papua was by no means as straightforward as suggested, for instance, by Chatterton (1969). Instead there was a period in which PPE was the dominant lingua franca in Papua, almost to the exclusion of simplified Motu. Consider the following statements: "'Go back!' they said, using pidgin-English which is the lingua franca of Papua." (Grimshaw 1912:137) "Pidgin English ... has been so largely adopted in new lands, such as Papua, that a passing note may well be given to it here." (Bromilow 1929:74) "Life in New Guinea [this book deals exclusively with Papua - P.M.] is enlivened not a little by the extraordinarily expressive and amusing pidgin-English inevitably used by the semi-civilised native." (Bushell 1936:9) "... along the coasts of the Territory of Papua it is more extensively used than its competitor, the pidginized Motu language." (Reinecke 1937:727)

Ample evidence to support these statements will be given below. It seems that the misconceptions as to the existence of PPE stem from two main sources: first, the readiness to accept legends about the nature and origins of languages if they are in agreement with one's own political aims (a tendency ironically deplored by Chatterton (1969:42)),

and second, the fact that PPE is referred to by many of its speakers and superficial observers as English.[5]

In the grammatical description below, however, I shall demonstrate that this language was significantly more than simplified English.

The extent to which PPE is known in present-day Papua could not be ascertained by the author. Whilst in many parts of the country the language is functionally dead, data published by Laade in 1968 suggest that it is alive and well in some areas adjacent to the Torres Straits Islands. It would not be surprising if similar findings could be made for the Eastern Islands of Papua and some areas adjacent to the former Trust Territory of New Guinea. Bahnemann's book published in 1964 suggests that PPE was functioning in the Fly River area of the Western Province not so long ago. It is not inconceivable that some of those Papuans who claimed to speak English in the 1971 census are in fact speakers of a type of language closer to PPE.

One must hope that more about the present-day use of PPE will become known soon, as such information may be of importance in the ongoing national language debate (cf. McDonald 1976).

## 3. A BRIEF NOTE ON THE DATA AND METHODS USED

PPE is a functionally very restricted and an almost extinct language. This has put a number of limitations on this investigation, in particular the impossibility of recording the language as used in a varied number of contexts and the absence of opportunities for observer-participation. As a result, this study is based on two main types of evidence:

a) data recorded in formal settings
b) earlier studies and reports

**Recordings** were made by Mr Iru Kakare and myself in Port Moresby and in a number of settlements outside Port Moresby during September and October 1976. Because of the advanced age of the informants, time limits and the circumstances under which these recordings were made, only about one hour of usable spoken texts were recorded. The transcription of these proved a very difficult task.

**Formal interview techniques** were used to elicit lexical and grammatical materials. However, this technique is only of limited use with Papua New Guineans of the age group interviewed.

Despite the obvious limitations of the data collected in the field, they are valuable for two reasons: (i) they serve as a check on data reported by other writers, (ii) my short experience with spoken PPE confirmed that I was dealing with a variety of Pacific Pidgin English

sufficiently different from other Melanesian varieties to justify an independent study.

Altogether seven speakers of PPE were located at very short notice, all of them men. They had learnt and used the language in a variety of localities and social settings, ranging from the domestic context to employment on the plantations and with the police force.

Some transcriptions will be presented in the appendix.

The written sources examined belong to a number of diverse categories, including the following:

**(i) Newspapers and journals**

I have examined the early editions of the *Papuan Courier* (1917-1930), but no Australian newspapers, which should contain further information. McDonald's collection of newspaper cuttings on the national language debate (1976) was a valuable source of information.

**(ii) Court proceedings**

So far only a small sample of court evidence in PPE has been located, including evidence taken in Queensland (1885), Samarai (1898) and various other localities in later years.

**(iii) Patrol reports**

Whilst patrol reports contain few actual language samples, information about the knowledge and use of PPE is common. So far, I have examined patrol reports from the Fly River, Daru, and West Irian border areas for the years 1903 to 1930.

**(iv) Annual Reports of British New Guinea/Papua**

These contain a number of references to and examples of PPE.

**(v) Previous linguistic analyses**

Grammatical sketches of Kiwai PE were given by Landtman (1918 and 1927). The closely related variety of Torres Straits PE was described by Ray (1907) and Dutton (1970). No grammatical sketches for the eastern varieties of PPE could be located.

**(vi) Anthropological literature**

In this category, tales recorded by Landtman on Kiwai Island (1917) and Laade in the coastal areas of the Western Province (1968) deserve special mention.

**(vii) Travel reports, biographies, letters**

A vast body of writings by people who were residents of or visitors to Papua were examined. In spite of dubious quality of some observations, writings belonging to this category provided many insights into the use and structure of PPE.

(viii) Fiction[6]
Three novels written by authors with a long-standing experience of Papua provided valuable information. They are Grimshaw's *Guinea Gold* (1912), Bushell's *Papuan Epic* (1936) and Eri's *The Crocodile* (1970).

(ix) Oral history
Because of time limits this method was not exploited to any significant extent. However, interviews with both Papua New Guineans and expatriates are likely to fill many gaps in our knowledge of PPE.

## 4. THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL SETTING OF PPE

### 4.1. *INTRODUCTION*

Recent linguistic and sociolinguistic research is characterised by an emphasis on a multidimensional approach to the description of language. This means the consideration of language as it is manifested along the dimensions of temporal, social and geographical space, rather than its treatment as an abstract system. In the case of pidgin languages it is furthermore important to consider the social functions which lead to their establishment, growth, and disappearance. The evidence for PPE will be presented along the parameters just mentioned.

### 4.2. *TIME*[7]

Documents predating 1880 are rare, but there is some evidence that traces of Pidgin English, or Beach-la-Mar as it was called, were found on some islands near Papua. Moresby (1876) reports "natives who spoke a little English" in several places in his description of the Torres Straits, the Papuan mainland and the D'Entrecasteaux Islands. It was claimed by the recruiters for the Queensland sugar plantations that in the Louisiade Archipelago "Many of the natives spoke pigeon English" (Report of the Royal Commission 1885:xxii), a claim found to be unsubstantiated by the investigating commission. However, a number of the recruited 'Polynesians' had some knowledge of the trepang trade and thus knew some Pidgin English, as pointed out repeatedly by the commission.

Whereas trepang trading and blackbirding provided the earliest stimulus for the development of PPE in Eastern Papua,[8] pearling and contact with the Torres Straits Islands led to its development in the West. Ray (1907) reports that the Torres Straits Jargon English was in common use among the peoples of Mowata and Kiwai in 1898.

Though Papua was declared a British colony in 1884, no direct information about the use of PPE in other parts of the country before

1900 has come to my attention, though such information can presumably be found in early mission and patrol reports. Dutton (personal communication, 22 March 1977) emphasises that a central question is that of the language used and spread by the police force during this period. The first police force in Papua was established with a dozen Solomon Islanders (who presumably knew a variety of Pidgin English), two Fijians and eight Papuans, seven of whom were Kiwaians (who again may have had some knowledge of Pidgin English). Dutton's suggestion that some form of Pidgin English was the common language of the police force seems a very plausible one. On the other hand, it seems very unlikely that any form of Motu was used.

The years between 1900 and 1930 appear to have been the period of PPE's greatest expansion. The use of the language in various social functions and geographic areas is amply documented for these years. An example of its spread in one locality is that of Rossel Island.

The first indication that PPE was spoken on Rossel Island is found in a letter written by Captain Bridge in 1885 (QPP 1885b): "One or two of them knew the words 'tobacco' and 'pipe', to the use of which most of them were evidently accustomed; beyond this they were quite ignorant of English."

In 1885, Sir William MacGregor writes in the Annual Report on British New Guinea: "We found two men who could speak a little English which they had learnt when at work on the sugar plantations of Queensland."

Sir Hubert Murray, following a visit to Rossel Island in 1908 reports: "And the strangest trait of all in their somewhat complex character - they spend their spare time teaching one another English." That we are dealing with a variety of Pidgin English is clearly seen from the language samples quoted by Murray, for instance: **all the time he smells too much that fellow.**

Later visits to Rossel by Murray led to more observations about the spread of PPE, for example several sentences quoted in the 1912 Annual Report. In the same year Grimshaw (1912:291) reports that "the natives nearly all spoke English".

Thus, during the brief period of 25 years, we find that PPE is adopted by almost the entire population of Rossel Island and that, moreover, it is beginning to replace the traditional vernacular. Whilst I find it difficult to agree with Grimshaw's explanation, it seems nevertheless worth quoting:

> To be addressed in reasonably good English of the 'pidgin' variety, by hideous savages who made murder a profession, and had never come into actual contact with civilisation, is an experience perplexing enough to make the observer wonder if he is awake. Yet this is what happens on Rossel

> Island. English is the 'lingua franca' of the place, filling up the gaps - and there are many - in the hideous snapping, barking dialect that passes for speech along the coast, and making communication possible among the tribes of the interior, who vary so much in language that many of them cannot understand one another. How did this come about? I fancy, through the unsatisfactory nature of the Rossel dialects. Any that we heard were scarcely like human speech in sound, and were evidently very poor and restricted in expression. Noises like sneezes, snarls, and the preliminary stages of choking - impossible to reproduce on paper - represented the names of villages, people, and things. (Grimshaw 1912:191-2)

However, in spite of PPE's initial popularity, there was growing competition from Police Motu on the one hand and proper English on the other from 1930 onwards. Because of official pressure PPE became increasingly restricted to non-official contexts.

The Second World War dealt a further blow to PPE, mainly as it disrupted the remaining non-official domains (households, plantations) in which PPE was used. In addition, increased contact with Tok Pisin and the simplified versions of English introduced by the Australian soldiers further badly affected the linguistic identity of the language. Since the War, PPE has become functionally dead in most parts of Papua.

Thus, the entire life cycle of PPE from origin to demise was completed in a matter of little more than 50 years.

### 4.3. *GEOGRAPHICAL SPACE*

Evidence that PPE was used at some point in the past is available for most of those parts of Papua that had come under government or mission control before 1930. Beginning in the west of the country, PPE is documented for the following locations:

The use of PPE by VCs (village constables) in the Bensbach-Morehead-Wassi Kussa and Fly River area is documented for the years 1913 to 1933 in reports written by patrol officers from Daru who visited this area at regular intervals. This is confirmed in the writings of the Reverend King (White 1929:46-7), who mentions the employment of Fly River men in the Papuan goldmining industry:

> These boys have come from different parts of New Guinea, principally the Fly River and the islands. Of course they have learnt English, and a very funny kind of English it is. The master will say to them: 'Work he finish now; you go catchee kaikai' ...

Nevermann (personal communication, 1977) confirms the use of PPE, intermingled with words of Malay and Motu origin, in this area in the late 1920s. Finally Bahnemann (1964) provides evidence that PPE was used in the Dutch-Australian border area after World War II.

Both Ray (1907) and Laade (1968) report the use of PPE along the Papuan coast adjacent to the Torres Straits Islands, i.e. roughly the area between the Wassi Kussa and Oriomo rivers.

Daru was at one time a centre for the diffusion of the language. Its widespread use there in the 1920s is commented upon by Butcher (1963:50) and Beaver (1920:38-9).

Kiwai Island is another such centre. In fact, the most exhaustive accounts of any variety of PPE are those by Landtman on Kiwai Pidgin (1917, 1918, 1927).

Trade with the Torres Straits Islands and pearling provided an important motive for the spread of PPE in the Western parts of Papua (cf. Landtman 1927:453). Examples of the use of PPE aboard a pearling vessel are given by Brewster (1934). Brewster also provides examples of Malay-PPE bilingualism which at one time must have been more common in this area. There are indications that PPE in turn was used in Dutch New Guinea, particularly in trade between Merauke and Papua (Nevermann, personal communication, 1977).

Relatively little evidence of PPE is available for the Gulf area. This may be due to its relative isolation and the absence of any significant European settlements. Hides (1935:17) reports the use of PPE at Kairuku station, and one of my informants mentioned that it was spoken at Kerema. The literature dealing with this area, in particular localities such as Yule Island, needs to be examined in more detail.

The presence of PPE in the Central area of Papua is well documented, and employment of Papuans from other areas in the industries and plantations of this area was one of the factors that promoted the spread of PPE. Most important is the evidence that PPE was widely used in Port Moresby, as this evidence further disconfirms the alleged continuity of transmission between the Motu Trade language and Police Motu. Evidence in the literature examined include examples of PPE as spoken in Hanuabada (Grimshaw 1911:41), in urban Port Moresby (Cameron 1923: 72-3) and a letter to the *Papuan Courier* of 25 August 1926 by a European attempting to render the 'comic' English spoken by his 'houseboy'. These three sources illustrate the use of PPE in the domestic context and the type of language used in communications between expatriates and locals. Keelan (1929:29) also states that for the hearing of court cases "pidgin English answers very well around Port Moresby and Samarai". Flynn (1937:219) gives a number of examples of PPE spoken by Inamotu from Port Moresby, "a cheerful native who spoke quite good pidgin-English". I myself had little trouble finding inhabitants of Port Moresby who could still speak the language in 1976. I was told by them that PPE was also used at the Bubuna copper mine near Port

Moresby that ceased operations in 1927. Henley (1927:20-1) claims that "at Port Moresby, the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Hubert Murray, K.C.M.G., will not tolerate this jargon" and that "the natives of Port Moresby speak good, plain, understandable English, in marked contrast to those at Rabaul". Whilst the indications are that PPE was being replaced by simplified Motu and simplified English in the 1920s, Henley's claim about English is probably exaggerated. As late as the mid-1930s Dromgold (1938) gives examples of PPE as used in the Moresby area.

The next important centre of use of PPE east of Moresby was the plantation settlement of Rigo. Numerous examples are given by Dromgold (1938). He also gives examples of PPE as used in Hula, some miles east of Rigo.

Samarai and the plantations of the Milne Bay area were one of the strongholds of PPE. Bushell's novel *Papuan Epic*, based on his experiences as a patrol officer, provides detailed information about the spread and popularity of PPE in this part of the colony. Some earlier information is also found in Grimshaw's novel *Guinea Gold* (1912). Newton (1914:25) reports the use of PPE in the church services held at Samarai prison, whilst a number of court proceedings indicate that it was widely used in this context in the Samarai area.

To conclude the remarks on PPE on the Papuan mainland, its use in Tufi (north coast) is reported by Chignell (1915), whilst Humphries provides data on its use in the area adjacent to German Kaiser Wilhelmsland.

There is no doubt that PPE was (and possibly still is to some extent) spoken on the islands east of Papua. Bushell (1936) and Grimshaw (1912) provide a vivid picture of its use there.

The discovery of large quantities of gold provided one of the main motives for the spread of PPE throughout the islands. Thus, on Misima Island "there is a native population of about 2,000 scattered along the coastline in about thirty villages. Most of them speak English." (*Papuan Courier*, 14 November 1919)

In this account of PPE's geographical spread I have concentrated on the main centres of use. Little is known about its spread into the interior of the country as a result of migrant labour, the practice of government patrols, and the involuntary stay of many bush dwellers in government prisons. From the data examined it has become clear, however, that PPE was not restricted to a limited geographic area or a small group of speakers but was, as contemporary evidence suggests, widely spoken throughout Papua.

## 4.4. *THE SOCIAL CONTEXT*

### 4.4.1. Introduction

The principal reason why pidgin languages come into being is the lack of shared linguistic knowledge by societies in contact. In the case of Papua, the linguistic picture was one of utter fragmentation. The communication problem faced by the government, the missions, and private enterprise was of an extraordinary magnitude. This can be seen, for instance, from the map of Gulf District languages (Franklin 1973: 15) or that of the languages of Central and East Papua (Pawley 1975:5). The communication problem was partly reduced by existing established multilingualism, the presence of the Motu Trade Language, and the early establishment of mission lingue franche such as Wedau (cf. Taylor 1976: 141-55, Lithgow 1976:157-70). However, the ordinary government officer, planter or settler experienced numerous frustrations in the first years of colonisation. It is this pressure for communication between the white and indigenous populations that has led over and over again to the establishment of varieties of PE. Thus by 1909, King (1909:296) quotes the Administrator of the colony as having stated:

> The great difficulty of language is becoming less. For the east end of the Possession the digger and the trader are propagating 'pidgin' English. The vocabulary is not always eclectic, but it is very useful.

At the same time, the presence of Europeans and their institutions provided the stimulus for increased interindigenous communication, particularly on the plantations, in the police force, and in the prisons. The use of PPE in the various contexts involving vertical (between non-equals) and horizontal (between equals) communication will now be examined.

### 4.4.2. Trepang Fishing, Pearling and Other Trades

The earliest form of PE spoken in Papua was a variety of the trade jargon universally used in the Pacific between visiting Europeans and indigenes.[8] Unfortunately, only insufficient data about the early trade jargon have been located. Moresby (1876) mentions that he found indigenes who could speak a little bit of English in various parts of the Torres Straits and the D'Entrecasteaux Islands. Pearlers arrived in the former group of islands in the mid-1860s and some inhabitants of the adjacent Papuan mainland may have served as boatscrew and divers at that time.

A knowledge of PE resulting from the trepang trade is documented for the islands east of Papua in the Queensland Court Proceedings of 1885.

However, much remains to be discovered about this early trading phase. Trade continued to be an important context for the use of PPE. For example, the Samarai Court Proceedings of 1898 provide a vivid picture of its use in a trading post (also Grimshaw 1911:267 for a similar account for Teste Island). Whilst most trade was in the hands of British and Australian interests, certain trade links existed between Samoa and Duke-of-York based German firms and parts of Papua. An investigation of these links could explain the spread of certain aspects of other Pacific pidgins to PPE.

Whilst the trepang trade had already begun to decline before 1900, pearling continued to be of importance in the western parts of the colony. Beaver (1920:295) writes:

> An important factor in the Europeanisation of the Fly and coast men has been their work in the Torres Straits pearling fleets. For many years every young man has been in the habit of signing on at Daru for his nine months' term with the utmost regularity, and considered it as much a part of his education as his initiation in the Darimu. In fact his age was often reckoned as so many "times along diver boat".

With regard to the transmission of PPE on these boats, Landtman (1927: 453) writes: "As a rule, the natives learn pidgin-English from one another; ... even the pearling boats not only have native crews, but also in most cases sail under the command of native masters."

Thus, the pearling context provided a strong link between PPE and Torres Straits PE, which deserves further investigation. Some information can be found in Brewster (1934) and Bahnemann (1964).

### 4.4.3. Recruiting[8]

Recruitment of Papuans for the Queensland sugar plantations took place mainly in 1883 and 1884, after which time no further officially sanctioned recruitments occurred. According to Price and Baker (1976: 116) some 650 workers were recruited from Woodlark, D'Entrecasteaux and the Louisiades. Recruiting involved the use of Pidgin English, though at the time this medium of communication was by no means satisfactory. In fact, most recruits were simply mislead and 'pulled' (taken by force), as can be seen from the Queensland Court Proceedings of 1885. However, after their return from Queensland many of them had a fair knowledge of Pidgin and thus helped to spread the language in the eastern islands.

No more will be said about recruiting[9] as it would involve a study of what happened in Queensland. Suffice to point out that the variety established in the east of Papua was strongly influenced by Queensland Plantation English.

### 4.4.4. Missions

I have not investigated the role of the missions in the development of PPE in any detail. A brief discussion is given by Prendergast (1968: 317-25) and I am certain that a scrutiny of early mission documents would be very valuable.

As mission work was partly in the hands of teachers from Samoa and other Pacific islands, other pidgin traditions may have found their way to Papua via the missions. Whilst mission policies appear to have been aimed at using either the local vernacular or proper English, there is some evidence that PPE was used in mission work. Newton (1914:25) reports that a sermon in Pidgin English was an integral part of a church service regularly held at Samarai prison. In Bushell (1936:287) missionaries on Goodenough Island speak PPE and White (1929:46-7) quotes a letter from the early missionary Rev. Copland King on PPE which indicates that some missionaries were at least quite competent in this language.

### 4.4.5. Domestic Context

Before World War II the number of Europeans in Papua was small, as economic development was much slower than in the adjacent Trust Territory of New Guinea, the former German New Guinea. The main European settlements were Port Moresby, Daru, and Samarai. It is here that domestic employment of Papuans took place on a significant scale. That PPE was the preferred language in the domestic context (to the virtual exclusion of Police Motu and proper English) may explain why the language continued to function in this context later than in any other. Thus, next to early reports (Grimshaw 1912:208, Keelan 1929:28, Overell 1923:151) one also finds remarks on its use in very recent reports such as Bahnemann (1964:23,24,64).

Whilst functionally the most stable variety, linguistically the domestic variety of PPE (the kitchen Pidgin) is the least stable form of the language. It appears to have been of the 'belongalonga' type ridiculed by the government anthropologist Williams in 1936 (quoted from Reinecke 1937:747):

> Suppose I am talking to my cookboy, 'Billy, this time I go walk about along cricket ground. More better you stop here look out for house. And you no stop nothing, you clean em up altogether something. Suppose some other taubada (master) he come, you tell im I come house six o'clock!

The letter to the *Papuan Courier* quoted in the appendix to this paper is written in a similar quasi-pidgin. In contrast to German New Guinea, where Pidgin English was learnt as a foreign language, the British and

Australian settlers in Papua often regarded it as a mere simplification of English. The PPE spoken by the Papuan domestics, on the other hand, tended to be much better, as they used the language to communicate outside the domestic domain, as I could ascertain from my informants.

### 4.4.6. Plantations and Mines

Plantations and mines were found mainly in the present-day Central and Milne Bay Provinces. In these two contexts, PPE was a language for intertribal horizontal communication rather than one for vertical communication. Landtman (1927:453) observes:

> Many of the men in the coast villages can speak pidgin English and we have explained that they have learnt it on the pearl-shelling boats and on the white man's plantations in the Central and Eastern Divisions, where this idiom is the only one in which natives with different languages of their own can communicate with each other.

Bushell (1936:153,247,249) remarks on the fact that village constables often learnt PPE "long Milne Bay", i.e. on the plantations. One of my informants had worked there himself and remembered some of the plantation terminology such as **nuboi** *'new labourer'*, **smokhaus** *copra drier'* and **folaut** *'to fall out = to finish one's contract'*.

In order to ascertain the impact of the plantations it would be necessary to collect data about recruiting patterns and to interview both ex-plantation workers and expatriate overseers.

Mining operations were found mainly in the Central (copper) and Eastern (gold) Districts. Grimshaw's novel *Guinea Gold* (1912) gives an apparently authentic picture of the use of PPE in a mining community. Thus, as the working day begins (p.29) "the miners began to get astir, packing their canvas swags and shouting directions, in pidgin English and in scraps of many dialects, to their boys." Scattered references to the use of PPE in the mining contexts can also be found in the Annual Reports and in the *Papuan Courier*. Again, more information about employment patterns is needed.

### 4.4.7. Courts and Prisons

So far, we have looked at the use of PPE in non-official situational contexts. Its use in official contexts and various government institutions no doubt contributed much to its consolidation, spread, and social prestige. PPE was regarded as the language of the white masta (= government official) and it may have derived additional prestige from the fact that many indigenes were not fully aware of the differences between PPE and English. In fact, this applied to some of my informants in 1976.

Fortunately, the use of PPE in the courts is well documented and additional data should be obtainable with little difficulty. The earliest legal document featuring PPE is the *Report of the Royal Commission on Recruiting Polynesian Labourers in New Guinea and Adjacent Islands* (Queensland Parliament 1885), which contains numerous examples of Pidgin English spoken by labourers from the islands east of Papua. Whilst I have made a provisional analysis of this data, its inclusion in the present paper would seem premature, as the data need to be examined in the wider context of Queensland Kanaka Pidgin English.[9] This I have begun to do (see Dutton and Mühlhäusler 1978).

A next set of documents are "statements made by several natives of Sudest" on the Patrol Schooner *Murua*, Samarai 7th July 1898 (Commonwealth Archives C.R.S.691-Item 529). They further illustrate the suitability of PPE for the court context and the stage of linguistic development of the language before 1900.

Valuable information about the use of PPE in Rigo and nearby government outstations is given by Keelan, the wife of a resident magistrate. She mentions (1929:29) that "at Rigo, as at all government stations, there was a court interpreter who spoke pidgin English". Of particular interest are her remarks on the popularity of these courts:

> The height of enjoyment to a Papuan is the engaging of himself in litigation with either brown or white, or being the immediate cause of some one's having to appear before a court. The more witnesses there are to be examined, and the larger the audience, the better he likes it, and the more important he feels ... and knowing the importance of having witnesses whose evidence accords with his own and each other's, he will, when trumping up a case, rehearse these in their several parts until they are word-perfect, his law of evidence being, "If we all talk one fashion, the magistrate will hear us; but suppose one boy says one thing, and another boy something else, the magistrate will say 'Everybody is lying. More better all boy go along gaol'."

Extracts from court proceedings, illustrating the use of PPE, can be found in local newspapers such as the *Papuan Courier*. A famous case concerned the murder of a European on Laloki plantation. In the *Courier* of 24 December 1924, one finds a number of quotations in PPE such as "Andy bad man, he do something along me, bye and bye I do something along him".

Whereas the example of the courts is one of an official institution enhancing the use and prestige of PPE, the prisons had yet another function, namely that of serving as a school for the language. Thus, Grimshaw (1911:47) reports about the practice of making prisoners of members of a tribe against whom a punitive expedition is to be undertaken and instructing them in PPE during their captivity.

> The child [i.e. metaphorically used to refer to the prisoner - P.M.] consents to eat, accepts the wonderful presents that are made to him, and becomes quite at home. In a few weeks he has picked up enough pigeon-English to interpret roughly with his tribe, and then the expedition starts again - always after the murderer.

I have already mentioned the practice of holding Pidgin English church services in Samarai prison (Newton 1914:25) and its importance in promoting the spread of the language. This practice no doubt took place elsewhere.

### 4.4.8. The Police Force and Government Patrols

The spread of PPE seems to have been more or less co-extensive with the spread of government control, the degree to which the language was institutionalised being a function of the frequency of contact with the government. Government patrols, carried out by a patrol officer and his policemen, reached areas otherwise hardly visited by Europeans. The role of the patrol, and to some extent that of PPE, has been dealt with in numerous books, some of which have been examined for this paper. In addition, a large number of patrol reports is held in the Commonwealth Archives in Canberra. An examination of reports for the Western District provides scant but valuable information about the knowledge and use of PPE in this area.

Thus, expeditions to the Bensbach River and Dutch border areas found Malay in use as a lingua franca in 1903, in 1913 the first examples of PPE spoken by a member of the police force are to be found, and after 1915 PPE was increasingly being spoken by the local population. From the mid 1920s 'Motuan' (i.e. Police Motu) was used, although PPE is still in evidence in the most recent reports examined: those of 1933.

A vivid description of the role of PPE in the central and eastern parts of Papua is found in Bushell's novel (1936). Humphries' book *Patrolling in Papua* also contains many observations concerning the use of PPE. It confirms both Bushell's literary use of PPE and the tendency, observed in the western areas of Papua, for Police Motu to compete with PPE as the lingua franca as from the 1920s.

The main links between the visiting government representatives and the local inhabitants were the village constables (VCs) or village chiefs (mamus). These positions were typically held by men who had been 'boss boys' or labourers on the plantations and thus had a good working knowledge of PPE. An example is described by Bushell (1936:249).

> The Iamalele village constable proved himself to be a very interesting personality. He had picked up a good deal of

> connective pidgin-English during his years of work under white overseers on coconut-plantations in Milne Bay and the frequent visits there of the Government officers with their native police.

The Iamalele constable is just one of the many VCs on whose command of PPE one finds remarks in the literature, beginning with the 1898 court documents from Samarai up to Dromgold's observations in 1938 (p.219).

The literature examined reveals a number of important facts:

(i) that PPE was used by members of the police force from the early years of colonisation right up to the 1930s;

(ii) that the use of PPE in this context was not geographically restricted but found in all parts of the country;

(iii) that PPE was used not only between white patrol officers and black policemen, but also among the policemen themselves and between the police and villagers.

Thus, the claim that Police Motu was the language of the police force right from its establishment, or even that Police Motu had an important part to play in the first years of colonisation, can no longer be upheld without far-reaching modifications.[10]

### 4.4.9. Intertribal Communication

In discussing the status of PPE as an intertribal lingua franca we have to distinguish between (i) who speaks the language to whom? and (ii) in what setting? In other words, one must ask whether PPE was used in a way supplementary or complementary to the local vernaculars.

The evidence appears to be that, in the overwhelming number of instances, PPE was used in non-traditional settings, i.e. settings other than those associated with the speaker's home village. Thus, PPE was used to communicate with outsiders, Papuan or expatriate, with whom one would not have had to communicate prior to the arrival of the colonial system.

It is not quite clear to what degree PPE was used in the traditional village context and to what degree it may have replaced traditional multilingualism. The case of Rossel Island, where PPE took over many of the functions of the traditional vernacular (Grimshaw 1911:291ff.), appears to have been an exception.

Still, it would be wrong to underestimate the role of PPE in the lives of the Papuan peoples. One facet in particular, namely the mode of transmission of this language, throws light on the positive attitudes

and the desire to acquire the language in order to communicate with neighbours and outsiders alike. A number of writers have commented on the fact that PPE spread without the help of the white man. Thus, Landtman (1918:62) writes:

> It is a characteristic feature of life in New Guinea that the grown-up youths and middle-aged men in some of the coastal villages of the Western British Division can speak Pidgin-English, although there is no permanent white population at all in that portion of the country ....

Evidence that the transmission of PPE took place among the indigenes themselves also comes from a number of other sources, including Governor Murray's observations in the 1908 *Annual Reports* that the people of Rossel Island "spend their spare time teaching one another English". Hides (1935:65-6) reports from his patrols through 'wildest Papua' that

> ... the Waiatupuan Papuans had a 'bush university' for the teaching of police swear. It seems that students enter this place of learning to become acquainted with the art of lurid expression - in other words, to acquire a working vocabulary of English swear-words which, through frequent use by the Papuan Armed Constabulary have lost much of their meaning but little of their force.

It is hoped that further research can establish the extent to which PPE was on its way to becoming a true intertribal lingua franca. However, the very fact that government policies aimed at its extermination were so successful suggests that its use as such a medium must have been rather restricted.

## 5. POLICIES AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS PAPUAN PIDGIN ENGLISH

### 5.1. *INTRODUCTION*

The study of language policies and language attitudes in Papua New Guinea has developed considerable momentum in recent years. Some results are summarised in the papers presented at the 1973 conference on Tok Pisin (McElhanon, ed. 1975), and in the writings of Wurm (1975, 1977), Johnson (1974) and Mühlhäusler (1976). An important document is Professor Dutton's inaugural address (1976) and the subsequent national language debate edited by McDonald (1976).

The discussion here will be restricted to attitudes and policies towards PPE and Police Motu in Papua. Unfortunately, the information examined does not provide an exhaustive picture, especially with regard to Murray's policies and their implementation.

## 5.2. *OFFICIAL LANGUAGE POLICIES*

The widespread view that Motu or Police Motu was the government lingua franca in the first years of Papuan colonial history is possibly based on the following statement made in a widely read book by one of the first Resident Magistrates in the colony:

> I have abstained from putting into the mouths of natives the ridiculous jargon or "pidgin English" in which they are popularly supposed to converse. The old style of New Guinea officer spoke Motuan to his men, and I have, where required, merely given a free translation from that language into English. In recent books about New Guinea, written by men of whom I never heard whilst there, I have noticed sentences in pidgin English supposed to have been spoken by natives, which I would defy any European or native in New Guinea, in my time, either to make sense of or interpret.
> (Monckton 1921:viii)

Monckton arrived in Samarai in 1895; the court proceedings recorded in Samarai only three years later demonstrate not only that PPE had developed into a viable means of communication, but moreover that it was also used in official business. In view of this and other evidence presented earlier, Monckton's claims appear to be an overstatement. Note also that there is no indication to what degree the Motu used by the 'old style' officer was a simplified variety. One can only hope to find more evidence concerning this.

What little evidence has come to my attention seems to suggest that, faced by the enormous language difficulties in the colony, government policies before World War I were determined by practical necessities and laissez-faire attitudes. Johnson (1974:3) gives the following summary:

> In the Annual Report of 1896, Sir William MacGregor, Lt. Governor of Papua, called on the missions to teach English. The Royal Commission of 1906 emphasized the importance of English and recommended that its teaching should be made compulsory in mission schools. In 1897 education had been made compulsory for at least three days a week for pupils aged five to fourteen living within one mile of a school, in order to help the missions to obtain pupils for their schools. In 1907 this regulation was amended to make education compulsory only at schools where English was taught. Field officers in Papua, as in New Guinea, were pragmatic.

The half-heartedness of the government about the policy of spreading English can be seen in the following quotation by a missionary:

> The Commonwealth Government, through its representatives in Papua, have rather half-heartedly urged that we should teach English in the mission schools, and the missionaries are willing enough, and do what they can, for English to be taught; but what the Government really desires, and what the

> country, in view of the white man's coming, really needs is an easy means of communication between the magistrates and planters and miners and traders and the natives, and a very moderate vocabulary of pidgin English would satisfy these requirements. (Chignell 1915:105)

On the other hand, the readiness of the Government to accept PPE, at least as an interim solution, can be seen from the Rev. King's remarks:

> In the report of the same year the Administrator said: 'The great difficulty of language is becoming less. For in the east end of the Possession the digger and trader are propagating "pidgin" English. The vocabulary is not always eclectic, but it is very useful'. (King 1909:296)

The implicit assumption underlying the tolerance of PPE was that it could serve as a stepping-stone to proper English.

Few writers at the time doubted the wisdom of introducing English. An exception is Beaver (1920:38) who warns against the possible dangers of such a policy and who advocates the use of the local vernaculars:

> Interpretation is among one of the greatest bugbears of the district officer. New Guinea is notoriously a Babel, and to combat this appalling multiplicity of tongues - I have found three distinct languages within a two-mile radius of a station - the Administration has wisely encouraged the use of English among the natives, but no man can really enter into native ideas or understand the native, in other words, think black, until he can talk with them in their own tongue.

To what degree Motu or simplified Motu received official support before World War I is not quite clear and requires further investigation. King (1909:302) reflects that "either we must learn pure and dignified Motuan, or the Papuan must learn grammatical English." King does not consider the possibility of using a simplified Motu, and one begins to wonder whether any form of simplified Motu was used between Papuans and expatriates before 1914. There is some evidence that Motu was used in various kinds of official business. Thus, Chignell (1915:21) writes: "Government native business at Tufi is carried out in Motuan, which is the tongue of Port Moresby; and when the R.M. comes to Wanigera he and his police speak that language in the village."

Policies directed against PPE began with the transfer of the administration of the colony from Britain to Australia in 1906. Governor Murray introduced a number of measures to eradicate this 'vile gibberish', as he called it. Butcher (1963:50) remarks on PPE in Daru and the campaign to eradicate it:

> Many had picked up pidgin English but Riley had set his face against this horrible jargon and was training a number of young people on Daru to speak and read correctly in addition to training them in the vernacular Kiwai language. I was in full agreement with him and failed to see why the people could

> not be taught to use simple English instead of the vile gibberish they had acquired. I therefore set myself to cultivate the habit of using the simplest words possible to express my meaning and found if I did this, the man who spoke pidgin not only understood me but began to copy me.

Note that the policies were not aimed at replacing PPE with Motu but with simple English or the local lingua franca. That the use of English was encouraged by the Administration in the Western Province is also confirmed by Beaver (1920:38). The promotion of English, not Police Motu, certainly was the proclaimed aim of Governor Murray (1925:35):

> The advantages of Motu are admitted. It is much more easily learnt than English, particularly by those natives who speak a Melanesian language, it is not very difficult even for the average white man, it spreads rapidly, and, in a corrupted or 'pidgin' form[10] is the common language of prisoners, police, and, to some extent, native labourers. But there can be no doubt that the best thing for the native is that he should learn English. It is true that, in the transition stage through which we are passing, much of the alleged disobedience of natives is due to the fact that the employer has been unable to make them understand his meaning; but the remedy is to go forward to English, not backward to Motu.

This statement is puzzling in view of the widespread opinion that Police Motu was promoted by the Murray Administration. Murray's statement that simplified Motu was spreading rapidly is in need of clarification. Reinecke (1937:738-9) gives a different account:

> In view of the spontaneous way in which the natives had already taken to Pidgin English, the British and German administrators had no choice but to accept is as the lingua franca of their actual administration. Native lingua francas they found ineffective except in limited areas. Thus Motu, which the administrators of Papua once considered making the official language of that Territory, was in 1925 the tongue of only 2000 Motuan, spoken by 3000 other natives and understood by 20,000 out of a quarter of a million.

However, government policies promoting the use of simplified Motu in official business may have been put forward not long after 1925, which would explain (i) its increasing use in patrol reports and other writings, (ii) its rapid spread in the 1930s observed by Hides (1935: 165) and Williams (quoted from Reinecke 1937:763).

> By far the most important of these languages is Motu, which is the Melanesian dialect spoken by the tribes on the South coast in the immediate neighbourhood of Port Moresby. This Motu, in a very simplified, incorrect, or debased form is widely spread through the Territory. Pure Motuan is used by the L.M.S. in these parts; but its wide use in the debased form ... is due to the returned labourers, armed constables, etc., and to the Europeans living on outstations and plantations. These latter find it a very easily-learned means of communication. Pidgin Motu thus has the chance of becoming

> a *lingua franca*. Indeed, one missionary writes to me as follows, 'In the meantime ... large tracts of Papua have, in point of fact, adopted Motu as a *lingua franca* and are using it as such to an ever-increasing extent, and I am constantly receiving enquiries from miners, planters and others for a simple book on Motu for Europeans.' .... Away from Port Moresby, the more correct your Motu the less likely are you to be understood.

The existence of government language policies would also explain the practice of instructing captured bush dwellers in the use of Police Motu in government prisons. Hides (1935:160) writes about the experience of an imprisoned Kukukuku warrier:

> One of them, Didiam by name, was sent to and detained at Port Moresby for seventeen months, where he reluctantly learnt to speak police Motu, and a little of the ways of the Government. He was 'nursed' and 'tutored' in the hope that he would be of some use to Government officers as a medium of interpretation.

Thus, whilst much more information about the history of Police Motu/ Hiri Motu needs to be gathered, a few facts appear to have crystallised.

(i) Police Motu was probably established later than commonly assumed;
(ii) it received official support relatively late;
(iii) for a long time PPE was a very strong competitor in the private and official domains;
(iv) PPE was tolerated by the Government as long as it was absolutely essential, but successfully pushed back subsequently.

Whatever the precise events may have been, it is certain that PPE's importance had dwindled greatly by the outbreak of World War II. It is true that it was used in the war operations, as can be seen in White's account of the Japanese invasion (White 1945). However, by 1951 Lewis (1951:37) could write:

> In the English Territory the pidgin is more like a simplified English. It is used almost entirely in speaking to Europeans, as among themselves the natives usually use some native language, which is soon learned by all, and becomes the common means of intercommunication for that region. Thus on the south of Papua the Motuan language is spoken by all the 'boys' and most of the older traders and officials as well. A large part of the recruited labourers never learn pidgin at all.

### 5.3. *MISSION LANGUAGE POLICIES*

The missions were in a position slightly better than that of the Government in that they restricted their operations to limited geographic areas which could be served by regional lingue franche. Williams (1936, quoted from Reinecke 1937:763) writes:

> There are no large language groups in the country. This has been to some extent altered during the last 40 or 50 years, mainly owing to mission activity. We now have such major languages as Kiwai, Toaripi, Motu, and Suau, all used by the L.M.S. along the South Coast; Fuyuge in the R.C. domain in the interior; Wedau used by the Anglican Mission on the N.E. coast; and Dobu and others by the M.M.S. on the islands. These are languages deliberately chosen by the various missions for use in the areas where they are working. And it does not mean that they are native tongues of all the pupils who are taught in them.

Mission attitudes towards PPE appear to have been very negative, in contrast to those in the Trust Territory of New Guinea where some missions institutionalised Tok Pisin in the mid-1920s.

Newton (1914:26-7) appears to reflect the prevalent attitudes of the missionaries towards PPE when he deplores its use in religious services in Samarai prison:

> It would approach blasphemy were one to put in print the form in which truths of religion appear in "Pidgin" English, as for instance the way in which the Almighty is spoken of, or the relation of our Blessed Lord to the Eternal Father, even though the close connection of the sublime and the ridiculous has elements of humour. At least there is nothing blasphemous in the way in which a South Sea Island teacher began his address one Sunday to the prisoners: "My friends, I am glad to see so many of you here to-day." For my own part, when I have taken the gaol service I could never bring myself to use "Pidgin" English, and not simply because I am not familiar with it. Fortunately I have always been able to find an interpreter who knew Wedauan. He translated into "Pidgin" English, and if at times I writhed at the form in which my teaching appeared, it was not always possible not to see the humour or to preserve one's gravity entire.

Some remarks on the actual use of PPE in mission work have been made above (4.4.4.).

## 5.4. *PRIVATE VIEWS AND ATTITUDES*

Private views on PPE ranged from amused tolerance to outright condemnation. As most pidgins at some stage of their history, PPE was also strongly associated with colonialist and racist attitudes, and this may be one of the reasons why it was opposed by the more liberal thinking government officers and missionaries.

An example of a more benevolent attitude is that of Bushell (1936:9):

> Life in New Guinea is enlivened not a little by the extraordinarily expressive and amusing pidgin-English inevitably used by the semi-civilised native. It has always been the policy of the British pioneer to promote the speaking of English amongst native races. This causes much confusion in their primitive minds when endeavouring to express themselves in the new and difficult language of the white man. How far they cleverly succeed, and amusingly fail, will be evident from my pages.

Other characterisations are less flattering. The Rev. Bromilow (1929:74) calls it a "crude jargon of debased English", Cameron (1923:108) "very quaint", and finally Newton (1914:26) refers to it as "that barbarous perversion of English".

The strong association of PPE with rigid colonial attitudes and its rejection by educated Papuans, is portrayed in Vincent Eri's novel *The Crocodile* (pp.75-85,92,139-40), though the great majority of Papuans appear to have been under the impression that they were learning true English and therefore felt no resentment against the language.

A scrutiny of letters to the *Papuan Courier* revealed that the language question was much less in the minds of the expatriate community in Papua than it was in those of the colonials in the Trust Territory of New Guinea. Still, many sources remain to be investigated, before an exhaustive picture of the attitudes towards PPE can be given.

## 6. THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF RELEXIFICATION

Now that an outline of the socio-historical context of PPE's life-cycle has been given we can examine what help this data can be in confirming or disconfirming the relexification hypothesis concerning PPE and Police Motu/Hiri Motu proposed by Dutton. Such an examination is of utmost importance since structural similarity alone cannot tell us much about the actual relexification process. As Bickerton and Odo (1976:40) pointed out,

> ... the main weakness of the monogeneticist case is that it implies the claim that languages can be transmitted on a very slight basis of contact with virtually no structural alteration ... yet provides no plausible explanation, in some cases no explanation at all, as to how this transition was actually achieved.

It appears that one can distinguish between two types of contexts in which relexification could occur:

(i) one in which parts of the speech community become isolated whilst other parts experience contact with a different language. This presumably explains the linguistic picture in Surinam discussed by Voorhoeve (1973:133-45);

(ii) the 'classical' relexification context involving a small number of bilinguals who create a new pidgin tradition by replacing the lexical items of a pidgin they know with lexical items from another language also known to them.

To what extent relexification of the one or the other type has had a part in the development of various pidgins and creoles remains a

point of hot debate (for Tok Pisin compare remarks by Hall (1975)). Presumably, the latter situation is the only one that could have occurred in Papua, considering the lack of population movements and time.

Some evidence about the amount of PPE/Motu bilingualism can be gleaned from reports about interpreting in a number of contexts. It appears that the classical interpretation chain originally was something like this:

| patrol officer<br>white magistrate | | black constable<br>interpreter | | second<br>constable | | Papuan<br>villager |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| simple English<br>PPE? | → | Motu | → | vernacular 1 | → | vernacular 2 |

An example is the situation mentioned in the patrol report (July-September 1926 from Daru to the Wassi Kussa and Bensbach rivers) where questions had to be translated from English to Motu to Tawnda to Tere. Another example is given by Bushell (1936:25).[11]

A variation on this theme is provided by Chignell (1915:149):

> All this indigestible mass of mangled politics and poetry had to be passed from one interpreter to another. The magistrate himself was an Irishman, and an orderly rendered his master's eloquence into pidgin English. An armed native constable translated it from that into a South Coast Papuan dialect, and then it filtered through a third interpreter who had learned something of "Hanua Bada Talk" in prison at Port Moresby, and who also professed to speak a language with which the Doriri were not quite unfamiliar.

Thus, PPE-Motu (perhaps simplified Motu) bilingualism must have been most developed among the members of the police force. Examples of bilingualism and code-switching by policemen and ex-policemen are indeed readily found. For example, the patrol officer Faithom (patrol carried out in February/March 1933 to the Morehead and Bensbach rivers; Commonwealth Archives 3512131) finds a missionary (p.9):

> The man spoke quite good English and displayed a very affable manner but when later I heard him switch on to a fluent Motuan I asked him who he was. 'Oh', he said, 'My name is NAPAN, before time I was police cookie at TAWNDA police camp'.

Perhaps the most valuable evidence is provided by Humphries (1923), as it contains a number of examples of code-switching. Thus, one of the policemen in his charge "could not refrain from an exclamation of astonishment. 'I no savee that one, Taubada', he said, 'ine be edua korikori' (it is truly strange)" (p.121). The policemen (pp.78-9) are found to be engaged in a conversation involving not only straight code-switching, but also mixing at the lexical and syntactic levels. One

can argue that such bilingualism eventually led to changes in the interpreting chain illustrated above. In some instances, both government officials and their black subordinates made use of PPE only. Such a case is described by Keelan (1929:29):

> At Rigo ... there was a court interpreter who spoke pidgin-English and was at hand to translate all questions into the required dialect, and to translate all answers into pidgin-English, in accordance with a comparatively recent ordinance which defines English as the official language of the Territory.

In other instances, and perhaps the majority, the white patrol officers or officials acquired a sufficient knowledge of simplified Motu to dispose of PPE entirely. This process may have been aided by certain psychological factors such as the antipathy against PPE, by the desire to use a foreign language in a foreign setting (a phenomenon that should receive more attention) and by official instructions from Port Moresby.

At the same time, Police Motu filtered down to the local population (at a very slow rate before 1925), thus becoming a serious competitor to PPE in both official and non-official contexts.

Again, more information about the socio-historical setting of language change in Papua is urgently needed, before some of the hypotheses developed here can become established facts.

## 7. THE LINGUISTIC CHARACTER OF PAPUAN PIDGIN ENGLISH

No exhaustive grammar of PPE was ever written, nor was any printed information concerning the language available to visitors and settlers. However, we are in the fortunate position of having comments of a number of observers.

These comments indicate that, as is the case with Tok Pisin (cf. Mühlhäusler 1975a:59-75), a number of social varieties of this language developed:

(i) the primitive trade and contact jargon, spoken early on the temporal axis and remote on the geographical one. This type of language attracted comments such as "spoke a little bit of English" or "his Pidgin English was incomprehensible";

(ii) a stable core variety spoken on the plantations, in the police force, and used in intertribal communication. For this variety Landtman's comment is (1927:453):

> An extraordinary circumstance is the remarkable degree of uniformity which in a general sense characterizes pidgin-English whereever it is used, almost independently even of

> the mutual dissimilarities of the indigenous local languages. This uniformity comprises the general idiomatic structure of pidgin-English, while the pronunciation, as a matter of course, varies ....

While Landtman's grammatical sketches (1918 and 1927) reveal a great deal about the linguistic nature of PPE, other observers base their judgement on more superficial impressions. Newton's view (1914:26) that

> ... it is strange and yet explainable how readily coloured people pick up and understand that barbarous perversion of English. It is framed on the same principles as their own languages, and every white man who cannot speak native seems to fall naturally into the use of it.

is somewhat simplificatory in view of the enormous variety of languages spoken in Papua. The question as to which of them provided the greatest substratum influence for PPE cannot be decided at present. Nor is Cameron's remark (1923:108) "very quaint is their pidgin-English and yet very much like the west coast of Africa" very helpful.

A poor knowledge of the language led Chignell (1915:65) to make the following comment about the lack of system in PPE:

> He does not understand my speech, nor I his. I am not an expert in Jargon English, while he, on the other hand, is fatally facile in the use of what certainly seem to be English words, in quite other than their usual sense, and with that complete elimination of mood and tense and number and concord, with over-generous compensation in the way of scattered particles, and personal suffixes to nouns and adjectives and verbs which is characteristic of the right 'pidgin' English.

(iii) the random addition of -fela and -im/-em characterised a third variety, the domestic one, already mentioned above (4.4.5.);

(iv) finally, continued contact with English in a number of contexts appears to have led to post-pidgin varieties. Bromilow (1929:75) speculated about the future of PPE:

> What is to be the future of this fantastic form of speech? New words are constantly being added to it (the word 'really' is reported as one of the latest), and it is conceivable that its terms may be corrected little by little, making it to conform increasingly to the usages of the language from which it has sprung. It is stated by a London paper that a grammar and dictionary of pidgin are in hand.

In the grammatical sketch further below, most attention will be paid to the core variety, whilst variation caused by social and geographical factors will be pointed out, to the extent that they are known.

A last point that needs to be mentioned is the fact that many observers were shocked by the 'crudeness' of the language. The liberal use of expletives is a feature which PPE shares with other pidgins spoken at the turn of the century. That this reflects on the Europeans rather than the indigenes is brought out in the following passage, quoted from Bushell (1936:249):

> In common with all his black brethren in their transitional stage of civilisation, he too frequently interspersed his pidgin-English with very profane adjectives which he obviously believed to be perfectly good and proper words to use.
> He spoke frequently, for example, of the "bloody government", as if such a description was respectful rather than otherwise, and looked curiously puzzled at Cameron's unconcealed amusement.
> Pi-sor, the patrol-boat's cookie-boy, had once upon a time done precisely the same and which often sent both Bulk and Cameron into fits of laughter.
> In fact, so much did the disagreeable habit grow upon him, that oft-times after lunch, when he came to ask the Patrol Officer whether he would like "cum-cum" (chicken) for dinner that evening, he would invariably append to the unfortunate bird such terrible epithets as to almost make Cameron's hair stand on end, but which the cookie-boy believed to be perfectly good English.
> Village Constable Jack had very much to tell the Patrol Officer about the Ebadidi people, which was both interesting and instructive. He agreed that they were still very wild, and spoke naturally of them as being still "bloody cannibals".

In terms of the life-cycle theory of pidgin languages (Hall 1962) PPE ranks among similar varieties of Pidgin English (such as Chinese Pidgin English) which have disappeared before acquiring a national speech community, not because of any inherent linguistic reasons but because of changed external conditions.

## 8. GRAMMATICAL SKETCH OF PAPUAN PIDGIN

Because of the scarcity and low reliability of the data at hand, the following sketch must be regarded as highly tentative. In addition, it seems that PPE never reached the degree of stability found in Tok Pisin, this no doubt being a function of the continued presence of the English model. Nevertheless, it does appear to be possible to sketch a kind of core grammar of its "remarkable degree of uniformity" (Landtman 1927:453), whilst, at the same time, pointing to the main areas of instability and variability.

### (i) Pronunciation

The sounds of PPE differ from those of English in a number of significant ways. Unfortunately, almost all sources prior to my own fieldwork employ conventional English spelling.[12] In some instances

derivations from standard English are commented upon. The following characteristics are reported:

(a) vowel epenthesis, as in:

akis *'axe'* (Flynn 1937)
sit-tiks *'sticks'* (Chignell 1915)
takkis *'tax'* (Keelan 1929)

My own recordings suggest that this was not a very prominent feature of the language. Thus, pronunciations such as ston *'stone'*, ple$^{i}$s *'place'* and graun *'ground'* are quite common.

(b) reduction of English words to bisyllabic words, as in:

nother, nada or naza *'another'* (Bushell 1936)
tabac, tábak *'tobacco'* (Bushell 1936)

(c) reduction of consonant clusters, both initially and finally, as in:

Missi Koti *'Misses Scott'* (Grimshaw 1912)
paun *'pound'* (Mühlhäusler 1976)

(d) reduced consonant inventory, e.g.:

| English | | PPE | Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| f,p | → | p | pall down (Grimshaw 1912) |
| | | | pyre *(= 'fire')* (Grimshaw 1912) |
| l,r | → | l | spilit *(= 'spirit')* (Grimshaw 1912) |

Bushell (1936:89) observes that rat is pronounced lat, since "the Papuans seem unable to pronounce their r's". My own recordings also suggest the loss of the voiced/voiceless distinction initially and finally, e.g.:

| English | | PPE | Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| p,b | → | p | pik *'pig'*, pik *'big'* |
| k,g | → | k | bek *'bag'*, bek *'back'* |
| t,d | → | t | tok *'dog'*, tok *'talk'* |

Landtman (1927:454) also mentions the absence of ð, θ, ʃ and tʃ, an observation which is confirmed by other data, including my own, e.g.:

I been tink (Humphries 1923)

(e) no observations about the vowel system of PPE could be found in earlier work. My data suggest a five-vowel system:

i u
e o
a

In addition, there are four diphthongs:

a$^{o}$ a$^{e}$
e$^{i}$
o$^{i}$

e$^{i}$ is typically found in words such as de$^{i}$ *'day'* and ple$^{i}$s *'place'*, no doubt an influence from Australian English.

Landtman (1927:453) remarks: "The pronunciation, as a matter of course, varies to a great extent in different countries, according to the faculty of the natives in imitating European pronunciation." My own impression is that European pronunciation served as a model - in contrast to Tok Pisin - where indigenous standards developed fairly early.

**(2) Inflectional Morphology and Word Formation**

(a) PPE, like other pidgins, has almost no inflectional morphology. With regard to nouns, Landtman (1927:454) remarks:

> Nouns. All nouns are used in the singular number, no inflection whatever occurs, and variations of meaning, corresponding to inflected forms in European languages, are expressed by separate words. In exceptional cases the natives show a certain notion of the existance of a plural 's'; thus the form 'boys', of such frequent use in the speech of white people, is also met with in individual expressions in pidgin-English. In other cases the plural form of a noun is by the natives taken for the normal form of the word; some people, for instance, in their talk constantly used the form 'coconus' (not 'coconuts') for the singular number as well, and 'teeth' is the common word for tooth.

Examples of plural -s were also found in other accounts of PPE and in my own data.

(b) No inflectional endings were found with verb stems. Grammatical categories such as tense or aspect are expressed by syntactic means (see below). There is considerable variability with regard to the use of the ending -im as a marker of transitive or causative verbs, often within the same sentence, as in Landtman (1927:457): "water take him away floor, take away grass belong house too."

As the feature -im has figured prominently in the discussion of the history of Pacific Pidgin English[13] I would like to expand on this point:

(i) There is a categorical absence of -im (in constructions of the type V+im+N) in the earliest records, i.e. court proceedings on the islands east of Papua, in particular Sudest. The Torres Straits Kiwai Pidgin recorded by Ray (1907) at about the same time contains a number of instances of -im.

(ii) Queensland court proceedings, recorded in 1885, exhibit some variation, though the verb forms without -im are in the majority. I hope to carry out a closer inspection of the Queensland data shortly.

(iii) Later data, supposedly from the islands east of Papua (Bushell 1936, Grimshaw 1912), both point to the variable presence of -im in this area.

(iv) -im never became a categorical feature of all transitive and causative verbs, as in Tok Pisin. However, certain verbs (including find'im, get'im, catch'im and take'im) are seldom found without -im, i.e. -im has become lexicalised in these instances.

From this data it appears to follow that we are dealing with the spread of a rule through geographical space (from west to east) and time (1900-1930). Due to the brief lifespan of PPE it never became categorical in this language.

(c) The behaviour of the adjective suffix -fela (Tok Pisin -pela) in PPE is similar to that of -im, in that it is also a highly variable feature. -fela is documented for Sudest Island as early as 1898 (*'this fellow man', 'this fellow boy'*). Landtman (1927:454) observes that nouns are frequently marked out by the preceding word fellow: "One big fellow man he come ...". My own data suggest that -fela was not compulsory (lexicalised) with any adjective. Thus, dis is used alongside disfela *'this'* by the same speaker. Numerals behave in a similar way as illustrated by the following examples from my own data:

wan nait, wan de, orait, mi frait, mi lukim haumas, wan, tu, tri, tufela mo, foa, i tok, tufela i dai, wan i dai.

(d) Reduplication in PPE, as in Tok Pisin, occupies the borderland between inflection and derivation. Its functions include both the signalling of certain aspects and the variation of lexical meaning. Its uses in PPE are rather more limited than in Tok Pisin (cf. Mühlhäusler 1975c), its main functions being to express intensity with adjectives and duration with certain verbs. Examples are frequent, both in the texts recorded by earlier observers and in my own. Examples include:

you get plenty plenty tucker (Grimshaw 1911)

plenty plenty wok (Puxley 1925)

he talk, he talk, he talk, he talk too much, so I kill him (Butcher 1965)

water he go go go (Landtman 1927)

stap i go i go i go-o-o-o long hia (my own data 1976)

samfela mun i kam i kam (my own data 1976)

Note that both form and function of the reduplications in the last two examples are also those found in Tok Pisin.

(e) Word formation by means of functional change (cf. Mühlhäusler 1975c) and compounding is not well-developed in PPE, as is to be expected with any restricted pidgin.

No signs of systematic use of lexical items in various functions were found, though some items (e.g. **kaikai** *'to eat, food'*) are used both nominally and verbally, or as verbs and adjectives (e.g. **klin - klinim** *'clean - to clean'*). The most common method of deriving verbs from nouns is to add **mek** or **mekim** to the noun, a method also widespread in the earlier stages of Tok Pisin (cf. Mühlhäusler 1976:343-4). Examples include:

**make fight** *'to fight'* (Keelan 1929)
**make trouble** *'to misbehave'* (Bushell 1936)
**make paper** *'to sign a contract'* (Sudest 1898)
**make dance** *'to dance'* (Grimshaw 1912)

That compounding was a productive process in PPE can be seen from the fact that that one finds a number of compounds with no English counterpart. Three types are common:

(i) The type adj + N, as in:
**bikkaikai** *'the main meal of the day'* (my own data 1976)
**black boy** *'black male'* (Bushell 1936)
**dark room** *'prison'* (Humphries 1923)

(ii) The type $N_1 + N_2$, where $N_1$ signals the location where $N_2$ is typically found:
**bushman** *'bush dweller'* (Bushell 1936)
**hillman** *'hill dweller'* (Bushell 1936)
**Hanuabada talk** *'Police Motu, Motu'* (Chignell 1915)
**missionary girl** *'mission girl'* (Bushell 1936)

(iii) The type $N_1 + N_2$, where $N_1$ refers to the person or activity for whose purpose or use $N_2$ is designed, e.g.:
**boy box** *'chest in which signed-on labourers keep their possessions'* (Dromgold 1938)
**puri puri house** *'Masonic Lodge in Port Moresby'* (Chatterton 1970)
**doctor box** *'first-aid kit'* (Dromgold 1938)

(f) Because of the limited resources of word formation and the paucity of word bases, circumlocution is a common device. Landtman (1927:457-8) reports:

> The vocabulary of pidgin-English, as a matter of course, is very scanty, and one and the same word must often be used to express a diversity of meaning. Nouns and other concrete words play a great part as a means of illustrating such ideas for which adequate expressions are wanting, and thus similes or metaphors are formed, very characteristic of pidgin-English,

> and sometimes of rather amusing effect. A man, for instance, who wanted to borrow a saw, the word for which he had forgotten, made himself understood by saying, "You give me brother belong tomahawk, he come, he go." A native servant, who had accompanied his master to Queensland, where he saw a train, upon his return called it "steamer he go along bush". Natives who watched me when I enclosed letters in envelopes named the latter "house (also 'basket' or 'pocket') belong letter".

Other circumlocutions, taken from a number of sources, include:

sun-he-finish *'sunset'* (Grimshaw 1912)

sun-he-come-up *'sunrise'* (Bushell 1936)

Great Taubada in Heaven *'God'* (Bushell 1936)

(3) Syntax

The data examined suggest that there was considerable variation in the basic syntactic patterns, and that an SVO order was perhaps not the most important word order. This is significant in the light of Dutton's suggestions (1977) that Hiri Motu may be a relexification of PPE. In order to make available empirical evidence to test this claim, a wide range of variant patterns, as found in the data examined, will be dealt with here.

(a) Nominals

(i) Pronouns

There is considerable variation with pronouns, this being manifested both in different speakers using different conventions and in inherent variability with individual speakers. Fluctuations are particularly pronounced with plural pronouns. Landtman (1927:455) reports the following:

> Of personal pronouns, 'I' and 'me' are used almost indiscriminately, sometimes in one and the same sentence: 'I think me (or me fellow) go now.' 'Him' (often pronounced 'hem') is sometimes used preceding 'he', the pronoun thus being doubled: 'Him (hem) he go now', 'he goes now'. In the plural 'me' and 'we' are both used: 'Me altogether man come this place', 'we have (all) come here'. 'You me' expresses a kind of dual, by adding 'altogether man', 'plenty man' etc., also plural. Expressions such as 'He come kill we' are ordinary. As in the case of nouns, personal pronouns, too, are frequently marked out by the accompanying word 'fellow': 'me fellow' (not 'I fellow'), 'you fellow', 'him fellow' (not 'he fellow') in the plural: 'me fellow' or 'we fellow' (very often 'you me two fellow') occasionally 'we me fellow'; 'you fellow'; 'them fellow' (also in the nominative; 'they' is seldom used).

In addition to these pronouns, sambodi and everibodi were also found in the texts examined.

From Landtman's remarks it seems to follow that neither the difference between subject and object pronouns nor that between singular and plural pronouns was fully lexicalised. It also appears that no clear-cut distinction was made between inclusive and exclusive first person plural. None of the other sources examined, including my own recordings and fieldnotes, show this distinction either. My own data suggest that there is a tendency to adopt the English pronoun system, i.e. ai is more numerous than mi as subject pronoun and we and dey are competing with mi and oltugeta respectively. At all times and locations the possessive pronouns are expressed variably as either:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| bilong mi | or | mai |
| bilong yu | or | yu |
| bilong him | or | ? |
| bilong wi | or | bilong us |
| bilong yu | or | yu |
| bilong oltugeta | or | dey |

(ii) Noun Phrases

Noun phrases consist of a head noun plus one or more (mainly preceding) elements. Among these the most important are:

numerals:[14]

wan, tu, tri, fo, faif, siks, seven, et, nain, ten, eleven, twelf

e.g. tri monis ai du it *'I did it for three months'* (from my own data)

indefinite numbers:

all and altugeta are used as equivalents of English *'all'*, the latter being the preferred item.

sam *'some'*

nada *'another'*

planti *'much, many'*

Note that nouns are usually unmarked for the categories of definiteness and number and that disambiguation only takes place in the wider linguistic context.

negator:

In contrast to Tok Pisin and other English-derived pidgins known to the author,[15] noun phrases can be preceded by the negator no in PPE, as in no sickness he stop (Bushell 1936), no kaikai *'no food'* (from my own data) and no planti mani (from my own data). More commonly no is found before the verb as in plenty wild man he no stop (Bushell 1936).

**articles:**

Whilst a form derived from the English article *'the'* is often found (de, se), it is not clear from the data whether it serves as an independent grammatical element in all instances. Thus, whilst the article is generally variably present it is found categorically after the preposition in, as in: inde haus, inse haus. That we are dealing with inherent variation can be seen from passages such as:

ai go faind de fis, mekim kilim, ... ai mekim fis i fishuk, frai de fis, ... orait boi, em kaikai fis. (from my own data)

It appears that the use of the article is a late development in PPE, as it is neither found in the early documents recorded on Sudest and Samarai nor in Landtman's account of Kiwai Pidgin (1917, 1927). As it is also not found in Laade's recent accounts (1968), one is led to suspect that its use may have been restricted to the kind of anglicised pidgin spoken in the domestic context.

**other determiners:**

The deictic elements dis(fela) *'this, these'* and det(fela) *'that, those'* are in evidence in all areas at all times. In addition, Laade (1968) reports the use of dem *'these, those'* for the Pidgin spoken in the vicinity of the Torres Straits Islands.

**adjectives:**

As can be expected in a pidgin language, true attributive adjectives are scarce. The ones found in the texts examined include: bik(fela) *'big'*, gut *'good'*, wait *'white'*, blak *'black'*, hat *'hot'*, long *'long'*, dem *'damn'*, propa *'proper'*, smol *'small'*, nu *'new'*, ol *'all'*.
Some example sentences from my own data are:

| | |
|---|---|
| ai ste long taim | *'I stayed a long time'* |
| hi gut masta | *'He was a good master'* |
| hi dem netiv | *'He is a damn native'* |

The order of the elements in the noun phrase is:

(neg.)<br>(det.) (num.) (adj.) N

Few noun phrases are longer than two elements.

(b) Verb Phrases

Verb phrases consist of one or more verbs and an optional adverbial, e.g. kwik *'quick'*, and, in the case of transitive verbs, an optional noun phrase. The status of forms such as wokap *'walk uphill'* and go raun *'go around'* is not quite clear. They may be interpreted as either V + adverb or V+V.

Genuine chaining of the type V+V is illustrated in the following examples from my own data:

| | |
|---|---|
| samfela i go slip | *'someone went to sleep'* |
| wi stat wok | *'we started to work'* |
| boi i go wokabaut | *'the native man went for a walk'* |
| em mekim putim faia | *'he prepared the fire'* |

Variations on the theme of verb chaining (which cannot be discussed in full here as the lack of data does not permit generalisations) are:

V + en + V; V + long + V; V + pron. + V.

These types are illustrated by sentences such as:

| | |
|---|---|
| yu go en wok | *'you go and work'* |
| Japanis i kamap long sutim | *'the Japanese came to shoot him'* |
| Yuropean de kol mi kam bek, masta i salim mi i go gen | *'the Europeans called me back, the white man sent me again'* |

(c) Aspect, Tense and Modalities

In contrast to Tok Pisin, which possesses a highly developed set of aspect and tense markers and modals (cf. Wurm 1975), PPE is deficient in this regard, though some parallels with Tok Pisin were found in my own recordings and - to a lesser extent - in earlier texts.

With the exception of been 'indicator of past tense', which is well documented for all varieties of PPE, tense markers appear outside the verb phrase in the form of sentence or paragraph-initial adverbials. Note that, as in Tok Pisin, the relationship of 'prior to' or 'after' an event referred to is more important than that of 'prior to' or 'after' the time of speaking. Thus, tumora *'tomorrow'* also includes the meaning *'the day after'*. The relationship 'prior to' is signalled by adverbials such as bifo *'before, earlier'*, yestade *'the day before'* and dis woa i stap forti tu *'in the war year of 1942'*. Events subsequent to other events are introduced by adverbials such as baimbai *'in the future'*, neks mande *'next Monday'* and bihain *'afterwards'*.

Directional verbs can take the markers i go 'direction away from speaker' and i kam 'direction towards speaker', e.g.:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| putim i go long paia | *'put it in the fire'* | |
| karim i kam | *'bring it here'* | (from my own data) |

One instance of habitual action signalled by save was also found in the corpus:

save kaikai planti kaikai *'they used to eat a lot of food'*

duration:

This is signalled by a repetition of the verb or the addition of i go (i go).

frustrative:

One example of the post-verbal **nothing**, to express *'for no particular reason, in vain'*, was found in Landtman (1917):

**mi stop nothing** *'I was just there'*

This construction is very common in Tok Pisin.

completion:

Landtman's observation (1927:456) that "sometimes 'finish' is added in order to emphasize that the action implied is concluded" also holds for varieties of PPE outside the Kiwai area. In addition, **finis** is found at the beginning of a paragraph with the meaning 'the action referred to in the previous paragraph being completed' or, after nouns, meaning 'the action involving the noun being completed', e.g.:

**i kam hom, mekim putim faia, sago, fis**
**i putim i go long faia**
**orait, faia finis, ...** (from my own data)

can, must, etc.:

Modals preceding verbs are, unlike in Tok Pisin, very rare in PPE. The most common one is **can** *'can'*, as in:

**people no can stop inside along house** *'people cannot stay in the house'* (Landtman 1927)

The idea of 'must' is typically rendered by **veri gut** followed by the verb, its opposite by **nogut**, as in:

**veri gut mi wok** *'I must work'*
**nogut yu kam** *'You must not come'* (from my own data)

'Must' is also indicated by **more better**, e.g.:

**more better me come this place** *'I must come here'* (Landtman 1917)

No example of **laik** preceding a verb was found in any of the early texts, although **want** is in evidence in the 1898 court proceedings of Sudest. However, **want** is rare in later texts. Examples of its use are:

**me no want fight white man, me want stop good** *'I do not want to fight the white man, I want to stay healthy'*
**you no want kaikai** *'you don't want food'* (Puxley 1925)

An example of **laik** was recorded in 1976,

**yu laik mit** *'do you like meat?'*

(d) Simple Sentences

The data examined suggest two conclusions: (i) the conventions for word order were not equally fixed in all places at all times, and (ii) defective sentences are in ample evidence in most texts examined.

Whilst the question of word order convention still remains to be examined in more detail (it is hoped that more recordings of PPE will be made), a few interesting observations must be mentioned.

Relatively stable word order (SVO) is found in the earliest documents from the islands east of Papua, and also in the examples recorded by Landtman on Kiwai. Most of the other data examined (including my own recordings) exhibit considerable deviations from the basic SVO order. This could indicate that the PPE spoken on the plantations, by the police force, and in the domestic context was less stable than the nativised varieties of Kiwai and the Eastern Islands, and that there was a strong tendency towards the stabilisation of an OSV order in the areas between the two geographic extremes of Papua. This point is important in the light of recent suggestions that Hiri Motu may be a relexified pidgin English (Dutton 1977), presumably PPE. This matter will be referred to again below.

It must be kept in mind that the distinction between the two prevailing word orders is by no means absolute, and that the lack of fixed standards provided an additional motive for variation in sentence patterns. However, the basic sentence patterns will now be briefly illustrated.

**Simple declarative sentences**

Among the intransitive sentences one can distinguish between equative sentences, such as:

mi bos *'I am the boss'* (from my own data)
you my wife *'you are my wife'* (Landtman 1917)

and simple predicates. Among the latter we find two word orders:

| basic type | variants |
|---|---|
| me too much damn fight (Grimshaw 1912) | no good this place (Grimshaw 1912) |
| yu kaikai (from my own data) | nogut dis taim (from my own data) |
| bot i kambak (from my own data) | olgeta i stap dis man (from my own data) |

With transitive sentences, both types of word order were found with the same speaker in my own recordings:

| basic type | variants |
|---|---|
| mekim kaikai nau *'then I prepared the food'* (from my own data) | no wok ai mekim *'I did no work'* (from my own data) |
| sampela man katim rot *'some men cut a trail'* (from my own data) | olgeta man mi lukim *'I saw the men'* (from my own data) |

Both pairs of examples were taken from the same speaker.

Evidence of OSV word order could be found in a number of other sources, for example:

| | |
|---|---|
| this fellow turtle no can kill him | (Flynn 1937, recorded in Port Moresby) |
| plenty pig he carry him home | (Laade 1968) |

In both examples, the sentence-initial position of the object may also be a focalising device.

Prevalent SVO word-order was found in the following sources:

1898 Sudest court proceedings:

| | |
|---|---|
| Wilsoni give me fish line | *'Wilson gave me the fishing line'* |
| Nagevago steal calico belong me | *'Nagevago stole my loincloth'* |
| I hammer this boy | *'I hit this man'* |

Grimshaw 1911 and 1912 (islands east of Papua):

| | |
|---|---|
| you kill some tin meat, you cook tea | *'Open some tins of meat and cook tea'* |
| I give you plenty kuku | *'I gave you a lot of tobacco'* |
| you buy wife | *'you buy a wife'* |

Landtman 1917:

| | |
|---|---|
| some man been steal coconut | *'someone has stolen some coconut'* |
| tomorrow you me take dog | *'we will take the dog'* |
| me two fellow kill him first | *'the two of us hit him first'* |

(e) The Predicate Introducer hi, i

The use of an anaphonic pronoun hi after the subject pronoun him is briefly mentioned by Landtman (1927:455). Variable occurrence of i or hi is also found after third person pronouns and nouns preceding the predicate in my own data, as happens in Tok Pisin. Examples illustrating this variable use include:

Harry he say *'Harry said'* (Sudest 1898)

three fellow boy he come take me *'three men came to get me'* (Sudest 1898)

four white man come up *'four white men came up'* (Sudest 1898)

one white man he come *'one white man came'* (Grimshaw 1912)

old fella docta he been cut em up one boy *'the old doctor has operated on one boy'* (Humphries 1923)

big water he come night time *'the big rain came during the night'* (Landtman 1927)

people catch hold that tree *'they caught hold of the tree'* (Landtman 1927)

olgeta pipel karim *'everyone carried it'* (from my own data)

masta Reed i se *'Mr Reed said'* (from my own data)

(f) Expansion of Basic Sentences

It has been pointed out above that some adverbials and some instances of negation must be seen as modifying the entire sentence rather than the verb phrase alone.

negation:

The most common way of forming negative sentences is to insert no before the main verb or predicate, as in:

me no bushman *'I am not a bushman'* (Grimshaw 1912)

me no proper man *'I am not a proper man'* (Landtman 1917)

that fight he no finish *'that fight did not finish'* (Landtman 1917)

me no been make paper *'I haven't signed my contract'* (Sudest 1898)

masta no give plenti mani *'the European doesn't pay very much'* (from my own data)

Double negatives are reported by Landtman (1927:456), and also found in a number of sources, e.g.:

I no got no canoe *'I haven't got a canoe'* (Landtman 1927)

me no savee nating *'I don't know anything'* (Bushell 1936)

we fellow never go back some time no more *'we never went back any more'* (Grimshaw 1912)

commands:

Commands exhibit the same word order as statements. In contrast to Tok Pisin, the second person pronoun is variably deleted in PPE,[16] e.g.:

go back (Grimshaw 1912)

you go along house belong boy *'go to the man's house'* (Grimshaw 1912)

yu go bringing kago *'go and get the goods'* (from my own data)

questions:

Sentence questions differ from statements only in their rising intonation, whilst word order remains unaffected. A great deal of variation is found with wh-questions, both with regard to the question words available and with regard to word order. Common question words in PPE include:

what name *'why, what'*

who that, who *'who'*

what's the matter *'why'* (all from Landtman 1917, 1927)

belong what *'why'* (Sudest 1898)

In addition, the following words are included in my own recordings:

hamas *'how much, how many'*

we *'where'*

watfo *'why'*

wai *'why'*

It is interesting that the form **wasmara** (*'what's the matter'*), which is commonly found in PPE, is a very rare item in Tok Pisin, never having been listed in a dictionary, and only recently appearing for the first time in print (in Dutton 1973). Its introduction into the lexicon of Tok Pisin may be a result of the influence of PPE.

Another noteworthy feature is the use of **who** in the construction **who your name?** *'what's your name?'* (Landtman 1917), a feature also found in Tok Pisin and the English spoken by Pacific Islanders, for example the Maoris in New Zealand, but one which has received little attention to date.

Word order in questions is not quite fixed. Thus, the author has recorded both **we yu go?** *'where are you going?'* and **yu putim we?** *'where did you put it?'*. However, there is a pronounced tendency for the question word to appear sentence-initially (this is quite different from Tok Pisin),[17] as in:

**what name you think?** *'what are you thinking?'* (Sudest 1898)

**where Harry put gun?** *'where did Harry put the gun?'* (Sudest 1898)

**what's the matter you stop all time along house?** *'why do you stay in the house all the time?'* (Landtman 1917)

**hamas yia yu stap** *'how many years did you stay?'* (from my own data)

**position of adverbials:**

The position of adverbials of time, place and manner is not entirely fixed, though here the preferred position is sentence-final with adverbs of place and manner, e.g.:

**ai go de** *'I went there'* (from my own data)

**ai kam bek hom** *'I came back home'* (from my own data)

**mi raun adersait tu Samarai** *'I went round the other way to Samarai'* (from my own data)

**yu wokaim gut** *'do it well'* (from my own data)

Time adverbials are often found sentence-initially, presumably due to their discourse structuring function. Examples are:

**first time people he no savy** *'at first the people did not know'* (Landtman 1927)

**insait dis yia mi stap Pot Mosbi** *'this year I stayed in Port Moresby'* (from my own data)

**prepositions:**

PPE is characterised by two conflicting tendencies with regard to the use of prepositions, both tendencies reflecting its instability. They are as follows: (i) a marked tendency to get along without using any prepositions at all; and (ii) a tendency to borrow prepositions from English, even those that one would not expect in a pidgin at this stage of development (cf. Traugott 1977).

In addition, there is a widespread (but not categorical) use of **bilong** to indicate possession, and **along/long** to express a wide range of spatial and temporal relationships. The functional separation of **long** and **bilong** is not always maintained in the earlier texts. Thus, in the 1898 Sudest court proceedings, one finds both **he put handcuff belong me** and **you no put handcuff along boy**.

The absence of prepositions is a widespread phenomenon both in my own recordings and earlier texts. Examples include:

**I been stop place** *'I stayed in the village'* (Sudest 1898)
**I go sleep house** *'I am going to sleep in the house'* (Landtman 1917)
**he go bush** *'he is going into the bush'* (Landtman 1927)
**sindaun sia** *'sit on the chair'*
**ai ste gavmani long taim** *'I stayed with the government a long time'*
**mi kam bek mai ples** *'I came back to my village'*
**go Nu Ailan** *'go to New Ireland'*
(last four examples from my own data)

Next to such forms as the last one, the same speaker used **goap long Wau**.

Prepositions borrowed from English are found mainly with speakers who have had close contact with Europeans, such as those who were employed in European households or workshops. Frequent use is made in my own data of **for** and **in** as well as **inse/inde**, a variant of the latter. It is difficult to say whether reported instances of **of**, as in **you like em drink of tea, taubada?** (Humphries 1923) are genuine examples of PPE or European fabrications.

(g) Minor Sentence Types

These can be divided into two categories, namely sentences lacking either subject or predicate and sentences that, due to the strong influence of English, appear to be outside the system of PPE proper. Because of the preliminary nature of this grammatical sketch, not all such types can be considered here, nor can the status of each individual construction be commented upon in detail.

'Incomplete sentences', one-word sentences, and other structurally-deficient constructions are symptomatic of the early stages in the development of a pidgin language. Their strong presence in my own data may be due to the fact that my informants had not used the language actively for many years, and that most of them were old or very old by New Guinean standards. Incomplete sentences are also found in some of the other sources examined. Passages such as the following can only be interpreted if supplemented by gestures and other paralinguistic features:

wokim gut - o hamas de - o wande, o tude - o tride, o fode - put it, - a - save kaikai, planti kaikai, putim sup, kek, bikkaikai, ...
(from my own data)

The translation would be something like this:

*'we had to prepare the special meals well - how many days? - oh, one, two, three or four days - we served it, a, you know, - the food we served, lots of food, we served soup, cake, a big main dish ...'*

'Strange' sentences in PPE may be either European fabrications, or else perhaps sentences learnt as a whole. The former type is illustrated by the following examples from Bushell's novel *Papuan Epic* (1936):

me see their houses and gardens
me had plenty rice

and one from Dromgold (1938):

Hula people have also hoping to catch'em plenty shilling and very kind tobacco along you.[19]

This last sentence demonstrates the tendency, found in many European reports, to employ co-ordination, complementation, and similar complex syntactic structures. We now want to examine to what degree such constructions are found in the pidgin spoken by the Papuans themselves.

(h) Conjoining and Embedding in PPE

A number of recent articles on pidgins and creoles have been devoted to the problem of the origin of syntactic complexity in these languages (e.g. Washabaugh 1975, Sankoff 1975). PPE presents an example where conjoining and embedding are in the process of replacing simple juxtaposition, though the latter is still very much in evidence. Juxtaposition, as present in the data, fulfils a number of functions:

(1) Simple conjoining of sentences or parts of sentences, actions occurring in the following sequence:

He take knife, he go fight Otapeg, another boy run up, he throw knife away (Sudest 1898)

or

you watch, me fellow go bush, I leave you inside house (Landtman 1917)

Events that occur in time sequence are also linked by en *'and'* or orait *'well, then'*, as in:

| | |
|---|---|
| orait mi bos, orait olgeta man mi lukim, orait samfela man yu go karim long kes | *'well, then I was the boss, well, I looked at everyone, well, some men you go and carry (it in) the case'* (from my own data) |

(2) Concatenation can also express the conditional conveyed in English by *'if'*, e.g.:

patrol no longwe, very good, patrol longwe tumas, no very good *'if the patrol is not far away that's good, if the patrol is far away that's bad'*
(from my own data)

(3) Temporal relationship (*'when'*) between two statements can be conveyed as follows:

(mi)sik, mi sindaun *'when I was sick I stayed at home'*
(from my own data)

(4) Concatenation can also express a causative relationship, as in:

Kiwai man no kill him two boy belong you, I big man
(Landtman 1917)

*'If'* and *'when'* relations can also be overtly signalled, conditional sentences being either introduced by sapos (in evidence throughout PPE's history and in all locations) or if (a later development, and one restricted to a few informants). For example:

suppose you run away, I take my gun (Sudest 1898)

suppose you no look out, you too much sick (Chignell 1915)

suppose some man gives them some, they laugh (Keelan 1929)

if yu no laik mit yu laik sosis *'if you don't like meat then you like sausage'* (from my own data)

Subordinate time sentences are found to be introduced either by when or taim, the latter construction also being common in Tok Pisin. None of these forms is frequent in the data. Examples are:

you hold him this knife along your mouth and when big fish he come you kill him (Bushell 1936)

where Harry put gun time he make you fast? *'where did Harry put the gun when he tied you up?'* (Sudest 1898)

Bikos *'because'*, is found in a few texts, for instance:

bikos mi save tok inglis lilebit, orait, Masta Reed i se *'because I knew a little English, Mr Reed said ...'* (from my own data)

(i) Relativisation and Complementation

Evidence that embedding of relative and complement sentences is beginning to develop in PPE can be found, although only a few preliminary remarks can be made at this stage. My impression is that juxtaposition remains the preferred construction. The few instances of overt relativisers and complementisers are of questionable status. Some data are:

(1) relativisation:

one fellow name Mat he go burn down my house (Sudest 1898)

you go along river where big tree stop (Grimshaw 1912)

people stop along Sydney go look see picture (Dromgold 1938)

that pigeon he been sing out my name, I plant him *'that bird who said my name, I buried him'* (Landtman 1917)

(2) complementisation:

In the texts encountered, this is found mainly after the verbs se *'say'*, think *'think'*, tok *'talk'* and savee *'know'*. My recordings suggest, however, that a new intonation group begins after these verbs, and that one is dealing with direct quotation in most instances. Some examples are:

I think somebody steal thing belong me (Landtman 1917)

then she savee me sick *'then she knew I was sick'* (Bushell 1936)

you talk back along this man that no wild man he come (Bushell 1936)

orait, sambodi i se: yu go wantaim kago *'well, someone said: you go with the cargo'* (from my own data)

(j) Grammar beyond the Sentence

Examining the data and listening to spoken PPE, one is struck by the similarity of the discourse structure of this language with that of old speakers of Tok Pisin. Though there is a marked absence of sentence-linking devices and deictic markers, the discourse is structured by elements such as:

oke, orait 'marks beginning of discourse, end of sense groups, and end of discourse'

go go go / kam kam kam } 'marks the passing of time'

yu savee? 'elicitation of comment from interlocuter'

In addition, there is frequent use of interjection, laughter and other paralinguistic means of communication. In fact, it is the use of such means that livens up an otherwise dull discourse. Chignell's observations (1915:65) are representative of similar ones by other authors:

> And he grins and giggles when he talks to you, and screws up his eyes, and is so very happy about you, and about himself and about everything else, that you forget to try and listen to what he is saying, and are content just to look at him and his parti-coloured contortions, and to let all intelligent thought and understanding be lost in contemplation of the fantasy of polychromatic clothing and vermillion hair.

This then concludes the review of the most important structures of PPE. There can be no doubt that its grammar is deficient in flexibility when compared with Tok Pisin or Standard English. However, one

must bear in mind that, at the time when PPE's development was interfered with by the colonial administration, Tok Pisin and Solomon Islands Pidgin were at a similar stage of development. In view of what is known about the development of pidgin languages today, one can conclude that PPE was certainly on the way to becoming as flexible a tool of communication as its counterpart in the Mandated Territory.

**(4) The Lexicon**

PPE as documented possesses a core-vocabulary of about 250 lexical items. In addition, there appears to have been considerable ad hoc borrowing from English in the various contact situations with Europeans, and from the local vernaculars when it was used as a regional intertribal lingua franca. The latter type of borrowing can be seen in the stories collected by Landtman in the Kiwai area (1917).

I shall concentrate in my discussion on an examination of how PPE agrees with or differs from other pidgin English traditions, in particular those of the Pacific. Whilst this examination is based on comparative work carried out by Clark (1977), no attempt will be made to go into all details.

PPE shares the world-wide pidgin English items **along** (preposition), **been**, **by and by**, **him**, **piccaninny**, **plenty**, **savee**, **something**, **suppose** and **too much**. It also shares what Clark (1977:21) refers to as Sino-Pacific features, namely **all same**, **fellow**, **catch(em)**, **got** and **stop**. Also present are the South Western Pacific features **belong**, **meri**, **kaikai**, **what name**, **gammon** *'cheat'*, **youme** *'we'*, **make paper** *'to sign a contract'*, **alltogether**, **calico** *'loincloth, cloth'* and **steal** *'abduct'*. Two items of the Samoan-Melanesian tradition are also present, namely **bullmakau** *'cattle'* and **kill** *'hit, strike'*, the sense of the latter being explained in detail by Bushell (1936:231):

> Papuan natives confuse the word 'killing' with 'hurting' as Cameron explained to the missionary, who was not long in the country. If he should suddenly smack Pi'sor's face and make it sting, the cookie-boy would cry out, 'You have killed my face,' but meaning that his face had been hurt.

Of special interest are those items common to PPE and Tok Pisin but not found in other pidgins, and those items which differ between PPE and Tok Pisin. Of course, in view of the limited knowledge of the pidgins involved when selecting such items, the following list must remain tentative:

(a) shared items not found in other pidgins:

**krismas** *'celebration'*
**kago** *'European goods, trade goods'* (in other pidgins often **tret**)

wasmara *'why'* (used in variation with what name in PPE)
hamarim *'to beat'*
hambag *'to misbehave'*

There may be more such items, as no doubt there were contacts between Tok Pisin-speaking German New Guinea and British/Australian Papua, as, for example, in trading by the Hernsheim trading company.

(b) items which differ between the two pidgins (these are much easier to point out)

(i) due to the strong influence of English and the lack of German and Tolai influence:

| PPE | Tok Pisin | Gloss |
|---|---|---|
| nani | meme | *'goat'* |
| maskito | natnat | *'mosquito'* |
| laim | kambang | *'lime'* |
| tri | diwai | *'tree'* |
| yang kokonat | kulau | *'green coconut'* |
| fakim | puspus | *'to have sexual intercourse'* |
| kof | kus | *'cough'* |
| dak rum, jel | kalabus | *'prison'* |
| calico | laplap | *'loincloth, cloth'* |
| plen | plen/hobel | *'plane'* |
| kokeros | kakaiak | *'cockroach'* |
| petrol | bensin | *'petrol'* |

(ii) due to the borrowing of different English items:

| PPE | Tok Pisin | Gloss |
|---|---|---|
| waild | kros | *'angry'* |
| wantim | laikim | *'to want'* |
| wok | wokabaut | *'to walk'* |
| am | han | *'arm/hand'* |
| danis | singsing | *'dance'* |
| folaut | finistaim | *'to finish a contract'* |
| hea | gras | *'hair'* |
| sel | kapa (copper) | *'finger nail'* |
| kiloka | hanwas | *'watch'* |
| smokhaus | haus paia | *'smoke-house'* |
| tetel | trausel (tortoise-shell) | *'turtle, tortoise'* |

(iii) due to the same item having a different meaning in each pidgin:

| item | meaning in PPE | meaning in Tok Pisin |
|---|---|---|
| masta | *'European government representative'* | *'male European'* |
| olgeta, oltugeta | *'plural'* | *'all'* |
| poison | *'poison'* | *'sorcery'* |
| kapa | *'copper, cauldron'* | *'corrugated iron, finger nail'* |

(iv) words borrowed from various sources, and not found in Tok Pisin: (many are of Motu origin and will be discussed under the heading of relexification)

| PPE | Tok Pisin | Gloss |
|---|---|---|
| kamkam | kakaruk, pisin | *'angel, bird, chicken'* |
| puripuri | poison | *'sorcery'* |
| sinabada | misis | *'European woman'* |
| taubada | masta | *'European man'* |
| sipuma | grile | *'ringworm'* |
| edau | narakain | *'different'* |

(v) marked differences in pronunciation and differences in the use of reduplication:

| PPE | Tok Pisin | Gloss |
|---|---|---|
| devil devil | devel | *'devil'* |
| flau flau | flaua | *'flower'* |
| pus | pusi | *'cat'* |
| ais | as | *'buttocks'* |
| pingas | pinga | *'finger'* |
| lip | lep | *'to leave, to be left'* |
| brokim | brukim | *'to break'* |
| wota | wara | *'water'* |
| fraiten | pret | *'frightened'* |

## Lexical Variation

Slight differences in the lexical conventions of PPE can be seen to have existed in the different parts of Papua, these differences increasing in its later years as a result of contact with Hanuabada Talk, a simplified version of Motu. Examples of this variation include:

| PPE | Gloss |
|---|---|
| jail place<br>dak rum<br>prison | *'prison'* |
| take him, catch him | *'to take'* |
| tucker, kaikai | *'food'* |

| PPE | Gloss |
|---|---|
| aidono, mi no save | *'I don't know'* |
| see, look | *'to see'* |
| and, na | *'and'* |
| tomahawk, akis | *'axe'* |
| kamkam, faul | *'chicken'* |

Other examples of this variation are a number of PPE/Motu pairs, sometimes used in the same sentence as, for example, by one of my informants, who referred to his employer as misis sinabada.

To obtain a fuller picture of the lexicon, a more detailed examination of the sources and, if possible, elicitation in the field is necessary. Because of the age of the informants, I found that lexical elicitation techniques are less effective than one would expect.

(5) Papuan Pidgin English and Hiri Motu: Linguistic Data

Fortunately, Dutton's comprehensive contrastive account of Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu (Dutton 1977) is already available as a foundation on which to base further examination of the relexification hypothesis proposed as a possible explanation for the similarities between PPE and Hiri Motu by Dutton. It has been shown that many grammatical structures of PPE were very similar to those of Tok Pisin at the time of the alleged relexification, so that it is not necessary to recapitulate Dutton's findings here.

A further fortunate circumstance is the availability of Wurm's comparative study of Hiri Motu and Police Motu (1964) which clearly illustrates the far-reaching typological differences between the two languages. A further important argument in favour of either independent development or, more likely, partial or total relexification is the demonstration by Dutton and Kakare (1977) that the original Hiri language is structurally and lexically quite distinct from present-day Hiri Motu.

I shall restrict my discussion to a few more general aspects of the relexification process and to the additional evidence that a structural comparison of Police Motu and PPE can provide.

There is no need to assume a single cause underlying the development of Police (Hiri) Motu. Thus, both simplification of Motu (assumed to be the key cause by Nida and Fehderau 1970)[20] and relexification of PPE are likely to have been involved, together with other processes such as can be associated with the development of a pidgin language. It would be interesting to ask, however, to what degree relexification was involved.

When comparing Motu, the Hiri Trade Language, Police Motu, and PPE, the high degree of variation, instability and developmental changes of the latter two languages should be taken into account. This not only applies to pronunciation but also to lexicon and syntax (word order). It is not sufficient to compare idealised synchronic descriptions, as we are dealing with an empirical question that can, in my opinion, only be solved once more data have been examined. The kind of data needed most are (i) evidence of code-switching and (ii) examples of language-mixing.

Relexification is the result of a special kind of language contact. The basic question is what languages or language varieties were involved in this contact. The possibilities include (i) PPE and true Motu, (ii) PPE and the Hiri Trade Language, and (iii) PPE and what Wurm (1964:19) refers to as 'Melanesian-type Police Motu'. My own feeling is that (iii) is the most likely candidate. However, the simplified Motu spoken around Port Moresby has not as yet been described in sufficient detail. Whether a comparison of PPE and Melanesian Type Police Motu is a promising project has to be decided by external evidence. Possible evidence would be that Police Motu became established in the most westerly and most easterly parts of Papua later than in the area around Port Moresby.

Having made these general observations I want to discuss some linguistic evidence supporting the relexification hypothesis.

(i) the Motu element in the later stages of PPE

There is some evidence that Motu began to establish itself as an important lexifier language for PPE in the 1920s and that at least some of the original English-derived vocabulary was replaced with lexical items of Motu origin. Examples of commonly used Motu vocabulary include:

| PPE/Motu | Source | Gloss |
|---|---|---|
| bamahuta | Dromgold (1938) | *'good bye'* |
| sipuma | Dromgold (1938)<br>Bushell (1936) | *'ringworm'* |
| edau | Keelan (1929) | *'strange, different'* |
| rami | Cameron (1923) | *'loincloth'* |
| taubada | Grimshaw (1911)<br>Keelan (1929) | *'European male'* |

How these and other lexical items of Motu origin were integrated into PPE is illustrated in the following example:

| | |
|---|---|
| suppose you come alonga we fellow, I give you plenty <u>kuku</u> (Grimshaw 1912) | *'If you join us I will give you lots of <u>tobacco</u>'* |

Prof. Nevermann (personal communication, 1977) has informed me that Motu words were in frequent use in the PPE spoken in the Western District in the 1920s, one of them being mamus *'village chief'*.

Information about the Motu element in the English spoken by expatriates can be found in an article by Wolfers (1969) and Chatterton's reply (1970).

(ii) PPE vocabulary in Police Motu

In addition to straightforward loans one can expect to find a considerable number of lexical syncretisms (cf. Edwards 1974) such as noho kava-stap nating- *'to be idle'*. The description of syncretisms would require a thorough knowledge of Motu and the various types of simplified Motu.

Another difficulty (discussed by Dutton (1978)) is that many loans could have been borrowed with equal plausibility from English at some later point. To arrive at a satisfactory assessment of the respective roles of relexification, borrowing from PPE, and borrowing from English, much more research is needed. The following list is therefore rather tentative:

| Hiri Motu expression of PPE origin | Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| gavmani | *'government (representative)'* |
| kuki | *'cook'* |
| galasi | *'glass, mirror'* |
| masisi | *'matches'* |
| sospen | *'saucepan, pot'* |
| sipuna | *'spoon'* |
| pasi | *'fast, stuck'* |
| tosi | *'torch'* |
| polisiman | *'policeman'* |

(iii) mixing of structure and vocabulary

Data from varieties intermediate between PPE and Police Motu are the kind of data needed most in the discussion of relexification. I am sure that fieldwork in Papua would lead to the discovery of such varieties.

That language-mixing occurred, and moreover in the context of the police force and government patrols can be seen from the examples recorded by Humphries. First, there are examples of Motu lexical items in PPE as in:

> I been tink you like em pish, Taubada, belong supper. I been catch him this one along <u>pidi</u> (rifle). (Humphries 1928:78)

> No good you drink em rano kava (plain water) all the time
> (Humphries 1928:205)

The most interesting piece of evidence is the following conversation between a policeman and a cook (pp.78-9):

> Handing his fish to my cook, with whom he was always joking, he commanded, 'Clean him first time!' Whereupon the cook, with mock indignation, replied: 'You policeman; me cook, savee?' 'Yes, I savee.' 'Vadaieni, oi lau. Sedila oi diba pidi huria, oi diba lase huria pish!' (All right, clear out. You might know something about cleaning a rifle, but you know nothing about cleaning fish!).

Of special interest is the word order in the Police Motu sentences:

| Police Motu reported by Humphries (1928) | Present-day Hiri Motu |
|---|---|
| oi diba lase huria pish | gwarume huria oi diba lasi |

If one compares the first sentence with PPE yu no save kukim pis one can see the close structural similarity of 1920s PPE and 1920s Police Motu. A comparison of present-day Hiri Motu with Tok Pisin such as carried out by Dutton (1977, 1978) thus under-represents the close structural agreements found in the 1920s and 1930s.

Another interesting sentence in Humphries' book is ibounai ia mahuta *'they are all asleep'* where ia *'he'* rather than idia *'they'* is used as the anaphoric pronoun. This may well be the result of an identification of the PPE predicate marker i/hi with Motu ia.

More evidence about code-switching and language-mixing is found in White's account of the events of the Second World War in Papuan New Guinea. Whilst his examples of code-switching (White 1945:92) involved slightly simplified English and Police Motu, the following passage illustrates mixing of PPE and Police Motu (p.93):

> A small boy sidled up to me and asked, "Me carry cargo, taubada?" He snatched at the haversack. I think he just wanted the honour of carrying cargo for a taubada, or was appalled by the indignity of a taubada carrying cargo, however trivial, by himself. But I said: "Las, las! This fella pusa (bag) pourri-pourri (magic)." He shied away and made off, eyeballs flashing.

The above data suggest that code-switching and resulting mixing of PPE and varieties of simplified Motu may have begun in the 1910s and lasted till at least the Second World War. More evidence of code-switching and language mixing is needed, as such information can tell us more about the extent to which relexification was involved in the development of Hiri Motu.

## 9. PAPUAN PIDGIN ENGLISH AND THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE DEBATE

One of the points raised again and again during the debate about the national language of Papua New Guinea has been that Tok Pisin would be unacceptable to Papuans as it is not part of their heritage. The coroliary of this argument is that Police Motu is part of their heritage, a very old part in fact. A number of writers have pointed out the fallacies inherent in this argument, for example Bell (1971:34-8):

> It is amusing that similar charges are not levelled at Police Motu. Yet it was the deliberate imposition of this minority tongue, by government enforcement, that obliterated Papua's Pidgin, the retention of which would have gone a long way to overcome present Papuan/New Guinean tensions.

Thus, unfortunately, a lot of damage has been done. However, I hope to have demonstrated that there are a number of linguistic and sociolinguistic reasons why the adoption of Tok Pisin as a national language would by no means be as out of character with the linguistic and social situation in Papua as made out by some writers. One should consider a number of facts:

(a) Tok Pisin and PPE exhibit clear structural similarities and informal tests carried out on students at UPNG confirm that PPE has a high degree of intelligibility for Tok Pisin speakers. One could almost speak of a common pidgin tradition in Papua New Guinea.

(b) Whilst PPE has been pushed back considerably, it is not dead in all parts of Papua. It would have to be revived and functionally expanded as well as brought linguistically closer to Tok Pisin.

(c) Because of possible relexification, but certainly prolonged contact between Motu and PPE, Hiri Motu (Police Motu) is structurally very similar to Tok Pisin, whilst being structurally different from pure Motu. This structural similarity can be exploited in the teaching of Tok Pisin to Hiri Motu speakers.

(d) It is not absurd (as suggested by Chatterton (*PIM* November 1973:74)) to introduce some Motu words into Tok Pisin, considering that:

(i) this is what happened in the past in PPE and is still happening to some extent among residents of Port Moresby (e.g. tura = *'mate'*; magani = *'wallaby'*; manilasi = *'bankrupt'*).

(ii) the close structural similarities between Hiri Motu and Tok Pisin mean that loans from Hiri Motu are less likely to violate the patterns of Tok Pisin than loans from English. Similarly, Tok Pisin would fit very well into the Hiri Motu lexicon.

(e) From point (d) it follows that it would be relatively easy to merge Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu into a single language in a way similar to that of Bokmal and Nynorsk in Norway. One may consider this as a solution to the national language dilemma in Papua New Guinea.

This article, however, does not aim to prescribe to the Papua New Guineans how to run their own affairs. Rather, I have entered the discussion in order to provide some evidence about certain important points which have hitherto been ignored, or insufficiently understood. At the same time, I hope to have revived a forgotten part of Papuan history from which a number of lessons can be learnt.

## 10. CONCLUSIONS

I have tried to adhere to the principle of accountability, i.e. I have presented the data that support my arguments so that others may check on the justifiability of my conclusions. Much still remains to be done but, in my opinion, there is no doubt that a close study of PPE and its eventual replacement by Police Motu could provide crucial evidence in a number of linguistic and sociolinguistic matters. So far, the following conclusions have been arrived at:

(1) Contrary to widespread opinion, a variety of Pidgin English was spoken extensively in Papua. Its study is a necessary part of that of Pacific and, in particular, Melanesian Pidgin.

(2) PPE appears to be most closely linked to Torres Straits Pidgin English (in western Papua) and Queensland Plantation Pidgin (in eastern Papua), with some possible influence from the Solomon Islands and German New Guinea.

(3) By 1900 PPE had acquired a considerable degree of stability, though some variability is found throughout its history.

(4) PPE remained a functionally-restricted pidgin throughout its life; it was replaced by Hiri Motu before a functional expansion similar to that found with Tok Pisin could take place.

(5) The virtual disappearance of PPE is the result of a number of factors:

- (a) adverse government policies
- (b) the fact that Motu was the language of the capital and that a significant proportion of the members of the police force were Motuans
- (c) the continued presence of English, which threatened the linguistic individuality of PPE.

(6) The role of government policies in the spread and disappearance of PPE needs to be examined in more detail. It is certainly not the case that the government promoted Police Motu right from the beginning of colonialisation.

(7) The changeover from PPE to Police Motu took many years and was marked by a period of extensive multilingualism.

(8) Both linguistic and social evidence suggest that relexification was involved to a significant extent in the formation of Police Motu.

(9) Present-day Hiri Motu has undergone a number of significant changes, possibly under pressure from pure Motu and internal growth, which renders it structurally less like PPE. However, the relexification theory can only be established with reference to Police Motu as spoken in the 1910s and 1920s.

(10) Relexification is most likely to have been a selective rather than a purely mechanical process. In particular, variation in both PPE and early Police Motu have to be taken into account.

(11) In the literature examined, the names Motu, Motuan and Police Motu are used in a very loose fashion. The full range of variation along the temporal, social and geographical axes remains to be studied.

(12) A knowledge of the linguistic and social development of PPE can contribute to a more informed discussion of the national language question in Papua New Guinea.

## NOTES

1. I wish to acknowledge the help of the following persons: Professor T.E. Dutton (University of Papua New Guinea, Australian National University) for inviting me to be a visitor in the Department of Language, University of Papua New Guinea and for commenting on the draft of this paper; Professor S.A. Wurm (ANU) for his continued encouragement and support; Mr Iru Kakare (UPNG) for organising interviews with speakers of PPE and for making available recorded texts; Mrs Lois Carrington (ANU) for helping me to obtain a large number of hard-to-get references; Mr John Harris (Canberra College of Advanced Education) for comments; Professor Hans Nevermann (Berlin) for a number of interesting conversations and for letting me make copies of a number of important documents; my wife Jackie for proofreading the draft and for typing part of the final version.

My greatest debt is to my informants in and outside Port Moresby. I sincerely hope this article will be of value to their country.

2. An exception are writers such as Wurm, Dutton, Reinecke, Bell, and Johnson. However the importance of PPE as a lingua franca of Papua is often underestimated. In many other writings, no clear distinction between PPE and Tok Pisin (New Guinea Pidgin) is drawn.

3. Uninformed opinions about PPE are also found outside Papua New Guinea, for instance in the following letter by P.R. Larkin to *The Australian* of 8 April 1969:

> Mr Richard V. Aldan, history master of Latrobe High School, has made one glaring mistake on the origins of Neo-Melanesian ("pidgin") in his letter to you.
> In attributing its spread to Sir Hubert Murray and his unification polic[i]es, he obviously is quite unaware that he was only Lieutenant-Governor of the possession of Papua and that pidgin was quite unknown there until after his

> death, and, indeed, until during the last war. It was then, however, developing very rapidly in the Trust Territory of New Guinea from 1920 on.

4. Note that considerable terminological confusion regarding the various varieties of simplified Motu and English is found in older documents. In the present paper Motu Trade Language refers to the language used on the occasion of the annual hiris in precolonial and early colonial days, whilst Hiri Motu refers to the present-day pidgin Motu used as the lingua franca of (former) Papua. No historical connection between these two languages is implied.

5. No doubt the existence of a pidginised form of English escaped a number of investigators, as the answer to the question 'Do you speak pidgin?' or 'Was pidgin spoken here in the old days?' would invariably be 'no'. In order to elicit PPE I simply asked my informants to speak English. This technique also led to my discovery of Samoan Plantation Pidgin.

6. A recent article in the *Journal of Pacific History* discusses Beatrice Grimshaw's role in Papuan history (Laracy 1977). It seems justified to assume that her observations about PPE are of the same degree of reliability as her other observations about life in Papua at the time. In general, the use of literature, written by people with a long-standing experience of a country, seems to be a legitimate source of data on pidgin languages.

7. A useful summary of the debate about the length of time needed for a pidgin to complete its life-cycle is given in a recent paper by Cassidy (1977).

8. Recruiting within Papua continued to occur after 1884. The following instance of recruiting took place near the Purari River in 1908 (reported by Grimshaw 1911:133):

> "I tell you what", the captain would say, struck by a new and brilliant idea, "you come away with me and go to work for a year on the white man's plantations. You plant cocoanut, you cut down tree, all the same as you do here. You get plenty-plenty tobacco. By and by you go back Maipua, you take calico, fish-hooks, tomahawks, beads, knives; you big man; you buy wife."
> Money was not mentioned, as the Maipuan scarcely understands the value of coin, and prefers to think in concrete terms. The prospect proved attractive to a good many, and

> there was some animated talking among the young men. "How many moons till we get the goods?" was the next question. The captain had come prepared with a knotted string, which he produced. It had twelve knots, and each, he explained, represented a moon.

9. Fieldwork aimed at determining the role of Queensland Kanaka Pidgin English in the formation of Papuan Pidgin English and other pidgins of the South Western Pacific was carried out by Dr Dutton and myself in collaboration with Professor Rigsby in August and September 1978. The project is outlined in Dutton and Mühlhäusler (1978).

10. Dutton and Kakare (1977) stress the pivotal importance of the police force in shaping the linguistic picture of Papua. More information about the composition of the early police force is needed before any strong claims can be put forward. The fact that a large proportion of Kiwai men served in MacGregor's police force increases the probability that a kind of Pidgin English was used right from the beginning.

11. One of the few in-depth studies of a case of chain interpretation in Papua New Guinea is that of Voorhoeve (1977).

12. Because of the lack of spelling standards and because of the fact that I have not as yet carried out a phonological analysis of my data, I have adopted the following conventions: (i) spelling from quotations remains unchanged; (ii) for my own data, the spelling conventions of Tok Pisin have been adopted, except in those cases where there is a marked difference.

13. Thus, Salisbury (1967:45) states that by 1881 "the use of **-im** to indicate that a verb is transitive" was firmly established in Pacific Pidgin English. My own data from various localities suggest that at this time, **-im** was a highly variable feature.

14. As can be expected, only a very small number of ordinal numbers is found in PPE, including **fes** *'first'* and **seken** *'second'*. No expressions corresponding to Tok Pisin **wanpela wanpela** *'one another'* or **tupela tupela** *'two each'* have been recorded.

15. PPE thus provides an interesting exception to the principle established by Kay and Sankoff (1974:64) that propositional qualifiers will appear in surface structure exterior to the propositions they

qualify, or not at all. In contrast to most other varieties of Pidgin English, negators can have constituents as well as full predicates as their scope.

16. This may be a direct carry-over from English as deletions are rare in pidgins. The full form may be regarded as the more natural one.

17. Note that in this respect PPE word order looks much more like that of present-day Hiri Motu. Compare:

| Hiri Motu | PPE | Tok Pisin | English |
|---|---|---|---|
| edeseni oi lao? | we yu go? | yu go we? | *'where are you going?'* |
| dahaka oi hereva? | wat yu se? | yu tok wanem? | *'what did you say?* |

18. Paragraph or sentence-initial time adverbials are typical of the early stages of the development of a pidgin. During its subsequent development these adverbials tend to (i) move closer to the verb, and (ii) get cliticised.

19. This passage illustrates a kind of comic opera Chinese Pidgin English rather than the Melanesian variety.

20. It appears, however, that Nida and Fehderau confuse the Motu Trade language and present-day Hiri Motu, i.e. they assume the latter to be a direct continuation of the former. The untenability of this view has been demonstrated by Dutton and Kakare (1977).

## *APPENDIX*

## Papuan Pidgin English Texts

(1) Extract from a letter to the *Papuan Courier* of 10 September 1926, illustrating European prejudices about the language and its speakers:

> Highpriced Taubada Misi James.
> Me I am educated native cookie-boy. Every week I am read Courier first, behind I make cigar for him. Last week my master is laugh time he is read Courier and he tell me my boy power house whistel is dead finish. Me I am too sorrey because whistel like watch for me because my boss is not get one clock for inside his house an spose power house whistel not sing out me I not know proper time for find him opener for capsize his breakfast, launch and dinner. My taubada he is two sorrey spose he buy anything. He is like make proper prisoner for his money al time. ...

(2) Type of Pidgin English used by Forbes during a punitive expedition on Joannet Island in 1886 (quoted from: J. Mayo: 'A Punitive Expedition in British New Guinea'. *JPH* 8, 1973:94).

> My talk: All you fellow savey Godau man very bad fellow. He kill him white man Captain Craig. Now Taubada Govment need pay out Godau man. How many you fellow go help catch them bad fellow Godau? (General assent) All right: very good you all savey bush plenty well. You all savey Nicholas, good fighting man Nicholas (assent) You all go along Nicholas; you catch him fellow kill Craig, along us; him fellow he kill cook; all him fellow kill Malay boys. You bring him alive along Niclas. Suppose Godau man, he want fight; you fight him, you kill him. Better you catch Godau fellow night time; you catch him, you tie him up, you bring him along Nichlas. Now you want to go fight along Nichlas Godau man. Speak now. 'We like plenty too much' was their reply.

(3) "Statement made by one Sam Manawah native of Jemiua, Sudest ... at Pantava the 1st June 1898" (Commonwealth Archives Item 529):

> About five months ago Harry Burfitt he come up town belong me, I been sleep Harry get head belong me he knock him

along ground blood he come out nose belong me. Harry talk where money where shell. He talk along Wilsoni give me fishline, I make fast this fellow man he take fishline he go make fast round my neck he haul him tight. Good hit he stop then he take fishline off. He speak suppose you run away I take my gun I shoot you ....

(4) Example of Kiwai Pidgin English as recorded by Landtman (1917:73):

On arriving there the two boys said, "Oh, mother, me fright now (for the Kiwai people were their enemies). You go straight where big brother he stop, you catch (find) him." "You two fellow stop along canoe," said the mother, "I go self (alone), sing out (call) big brother." And she left them. The Kiwai men were all sitting in the men's house, and when the woman heard her brother's voice she thought to herself, "Oh, my brother, plenty man sit down, my brother he yarn." She went underneath the house and waited there quietly. After a while her brother said to the other men, "Altogether man you stop, I go house belong me," and when he came out the woman went up to him and caught him by the hand saying, "Oh, my brother!" and she wept. "Oh, who that?" he exclaimed, and she said, "Oh, brother, I here. Kubira man no been kill me, he marry me." They went together to his house, and she said, "Brother, my two boy stop along canoe." "You go take two boy belong you. Kiwai man no kill him two boy belong you; I big man."

(5) PPE recorded on the West Coast of Papua by Laade (1968:96):

One man come out for fishing, other one stay at home. They think these two feller should come outside (to the shore) but one stay back. He stop in garden place, his own garden. When he (the first man) look the reef he see the turtle fast (= copulating turtles) in a dry place (on the reef). He sing out now for his friend, he said, "*Kaimeg* (mate): You come quick: got turtle here: We haul him up on top (of the beach)." So that man no answer. Now Wawa outside too. He spear kangaroo (with bow and arrows). He now answer, said, "Huuuuh." That man say now: Him come now. Wawa is (a bush spirit) all same proper man, big hell of a man, big face all same giant. He kill man all same fighting-man.

(6) PPE recorded by Iru Kakare in 1976, illustrating the post-pidgin stage of this language. Speaker John from Samo village; a middle-aged man:

Before I did no work, I just, I start one day washim cloth for European, finish, two years ago finish, after, me go home and one European, dey call me come back, start job for him an' he send me I go Moresby slipway. I do some job for machine (?), take this big ship his motor, takim off, washim good and putim back.

(7) Story told by Peter Farapo of Port Moresby, an old man when the story was recorded in 1976:

Gut, dis woa i stap, fotitu, insait nau dis yia, naintin-fotiwan, fotiwan, naintinfotiwan, mi stap hia Pot Mosbi, orait, masta, mista Humphries, mi ... orait, orait, Mista Jackson en mi kam bek hia mai ples, Telapo, orait, olgeta pipel kari, olgeta pipel ples i kamap long Waiapo en Alihava, olgeta pipel i kamap long Lakekamu riva, stat nau, woa. Sam pipel, bikos mi save Tok Inglis lilebit, orait, masta Reed se: O, yu save, orait, olgeta man mi lukim, orait, sampela man yu go karim long kes, fuds, olgeta rais mit, kam i kam, long bus, long Wau, orait, rait ap long hia dis ples long Lae. Olgeta kam, kam bek long Lakekamu riva, kam long, kam long Wau, kam bek, go long dis riva. Orait, i stap, kauntim leba (...), orait, sapos olgeta i stap dis man, orait, man i gat gut, sapos i no stap distaim, nogut, bikos sampela man katim rot, klinim dis ples, sampela man i karim, olgeta stap, mek hausis (houses?), i go i go i go i go i gooo long Lae. Save Lae? .... Olsem stat i go i go i go i gooooo, long hia, orait, mi kam bek mai ples. Orait, masta, mista Humphries, i salim mi i go gen, bikos no bosboi long hia, sampela i harim pulap Tok Inglis, sampela i no harim Tok Inglis, orait, mi statim gen, kam bek long, ah, ah, (unclear), orait, kisim long olgeta leba, karim dis olgeta staf, goap long Wau, putim, kambek long (unclear), kisim mo kaikai, i stap, kam i go long (unclear) Wau, putim, kambek. Stop wok. Nogut dis taim.

(8) Story told by Eka Kave of Sinaka Settlement outside Port Moresby. Eka had been a domestic servant for many years, and was an old man when the recording was made in 1976.

Ai go haus, mekim kaikai nau, mekim twelv klok, orait, kuk, mekim kopti, ai putim tebol, ai got hia fok, spun, naif, mi putim de. Ai go, ai putim sia. Masta i sidaun, hevim kaikai, hevim kaikai, gut, em i go haus, kam bek, o wokabaut, i orait. We i go? Ai go we? Ai go de, siksmail o (unclear) i tufar, o Waigani o hamas nem? Ai kam bek hom, mekim haus, slip haus, taim finis, mi go kaikai, kopti, orait, mi slip haus, inse ivening, inse haus. Orait, sik, inse haus, no wok, no wok ai mekim, ai sik inse haus.

(9) The same informant describes the preparations for a big meal.

Ai wokaim gut, o haumas de? I wan de o tu de o tri de o fo de. Put it, a, save kaikai, planti kaikai, putim sup, kek, bikkaikai, pik, planti pik, hevim pik o hevim tinpis o hevim mit, if yu no laik mit yu laik sosis, mekim gris praipan, gris mekim faia, i go, putim tebol, i go hia, sidaun sia, fok, spun, i hevim bikkaikai.

(10) Marare Siari from Sinaka settlement describes how he catches and prepares fish:

Ai go fain se fis, mekim kilim, mekim go long (unclear), ai tekim fis for fishuk, frai se fis, ... mi finis nau, ai kam hom, mekim putim faia, sago en fis. I putim i go long faia. Orait, faia finis, putim milk, fis, putim haus, inse haus, orait, boi em kaikai fis i go slip o i go wokabaut i go. I kam bek inse haus. De slip i slip.

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