7.4.1.6. CREATIVE WRITING IN NEW GUINEA PIDGIN

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7.4.1.6.1. INTRODUCTION

At some time in the last hundred years, the first story was told in New Guinea Pidgin, and the first song in that language was sung; but both these events, which would mark the beginning of creative writing in New Guinea Pidgin, escaped the attention of literate recorders. The data we have on early literary creations in Pidgin is quite late; the first documented songs known to me were collected in the period immediately prior to World War I, although they were not published until 1922 (Jacques 1922). They run:[1]

(1) masta bilong mi[2]
kambek kwik
mi laikim taro
mi laikim painap

(2) i longtaim long Sigismund
i longtaim long singais
putim daun long Roland
i go daun long Rabaul

ol kebin i no save nating
kipasim Roland
kipasim Sigismund
kipasim Sigisan

Undisputed story-texts in New Guinea Pidgin are even later; the first are probably those published by Hall (1943).

At this point we must distinguish three separate strands of literature in Pidgin:

Laycock, D.C. "Creative Writing in New Guinea Pidgin". In Wurm, S.A. editor, *New Guinea area languages and language study, Vol. 3, Language, culture, society, and the modern world.* **C-40:609-638**. Pacific Linguistics, The Australian National University, 1977. DOI:*10.15144/PL-C40.609*
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1) folk literature: songs, stories and speeches of indigenous Pidgin speakers, transmitted orally;

2) writings in Pidgin by Europeans, for the most part translations:

3) deliberate 'literary' creations in Pidgin by indigenous writers, and published over their own names.

7.4.1.6.2. FOLK LITERATURE

The first type is perhaps the most poorly documented, especially as regards songs. Apart from the song quoted above, only about half-a-dozen songs have been noted down by European observers - and that usually unreliably, in a mishmash of spellings, and without the melodies. Some important examples, with the source given in each case include the following:

(3) o ensinia (2)
gohet masin (2)
rere ap-anka (2)
masin i go (2)
o ensinia (2)

(4) taim mi lusim Vanimo
mi slip namel long solwara
san i go daun plnis
mi luk bek, mi no painim Vanimo
mi slip dek long Tara
mi sore mama na susa

(5) gutpela mun i kam
taim bilong singel i ron
singel-o, slngel-o
promis singel-o

(6) sanap long maunten Wewak
mi lukluk i go daun solwara
na mi sore na mi krai

(7) ol meri long nesi
ol i tait long rot
hankasip i stap antap
kolwin i bloim

(8) yu meri wantok
yu giamanim mi tasol
yu raitim nem bilong mi
ananit long lek bilong yu

(9) ol meri Matupi
ol i salim tomato
laikim tumas sikispens

(10) wanpela meri i raitim pas long mi
em i tok, bai mi go daun long wetim em, wetim em
mi kirap long biknait mi godaun long wetim em
mi go wet wet nating tulait hia

(11) Sotpela hia, longpela hia (2)
mi sanap mi lukluk long draiwara (2)

(12) mi stap long Moem barik
mi kisim leta long ples
mi stap long Moem barik
mi kisim leta long ples

ol i toksave long mi
papa i dai pinis
mi sore na mi krai
mi brukim unifom bilong mi

ol i toksave long mi
papa i dai pinis
mi sore na mi krai
mi brukim raifel bilong mi

(13) purpur bilong yu yu putim wet proksait
na ples i tanim
purpur bilong yu yu putim wet proksait
na ples i tanim

samting bilong husat (2)
na yu no ken pret

(14) meri nangu (3)
taragau i hukim yu (4)
nau yu ranewe marit (3)
taragau i hukim yu

(15) Busama i bin paia (2)
Wewiak i salim wailes
Busama i bin paia

(16) yumi hapi tude long dispela pati
tude yumi hapi tumas long dispela nait

(17) sore tumas long mi, sore mi yang kauboi
em i olosem asua bilong yu
kolim mi tupela taim, kolim mi yangpela nating
mi sore tumas na mi krai

sore tumas long mi, mi no save long yia bilong mi
em i olosem asua bilong yu
sore tumas long mi, mi ken lavim yu
mi sore tumas na mi krai

Example (2) is from Dean and Carell 1958, sung by the crew of a mission boat en route from Wewak to Aitape; examples (3)-(9) are from Willey 1965, mostly songs of soldiers and carriers on the march (Number (3): 'marching song of the Pacific Islands Regiment'); examples (10)-(14) are from Dutton 1973, mostly collected in the East Sepik Province by Mr Bryant Allen (Australian National University); example (15) I learnt myself in Port Moresby in September 1973, from the singing of Ralph Wari, a student at the University of Papua New Guinea; and numbers (16) and (17) were also collected by me, during fieldwork in Buin (Bougainville) in 1966 (and published by Hannet (1970)). The selection is sufficient to show that indigenously-created Pidgin songs are fairly simple in structure, express a mood rather than a narrative, make extensive use of repetition, and shun European devices such as rhyme.[3] Nevertheless, I believe that the structure of the songs derives from European songs rather than indigenous sources; such melodies as have been published or recorded are also derived from European sources (typically, 'hillbilly' songs, hymn tunes, and modern pan-Pacific 'Hawaiian' melodies). The usual accompaniment is the ukulele or 'Hawaiian' guitar, which few Niuginians have yet learnt to tune in such a way as to accompany indigenous melodies. An example of a song with an essentially European melody (in which the last few bars suggest the Irish song 'Kevin Barry') is the following, published in a book of 'International Songs' (1952):

(18) bipo mi wok long kampani
mi les tumas, olo masta rausim mi
bihain mi go long Kalakan
olo meri laikim mi

mi wok long de, mi wok long nait
mi wok tumas mi sore yet long mi
mi laik ronewe mi laik go hom
long kantri bilong mi

mi lukluk yet long wan meri
em i lukluk yet long olo taim long mi
mi tok long de mi tok long nait
'yu kam wantaim long mi'

mi tupela go ronewe, go longwe yet
long kantri bilong mi
mi laik tumas kaikai bilong mi
mi no laik kampani

The melodies of five other songs are given by Hannet (1970), and a recording of songs (10)-(14) can be heard on the tapes accompanying Dutton 1973. Many more Pidgin songs are regularly played on Papua New Guinea radio stations (for example, 'Mi waswas long pain serp /si i kisim mi', popular in the East Sepik Province in 1971), but have not been released commercially. It is to be hoped that efforts will be made to record this ongoing oral tradition in Pidgin writing.

A number of other songs are often cited as examples of indigenous Pidgin creations, but in some at least we may suspect European editing or rewriting; in this category we may place the two best-known Pidgin songs, 'Yumi sekan' (example (19)) and 'Ples bilong mi i nambawan' (example (20)) - the former cited from Hannet 1970 (with which compare a slightly different version given by Willey (1965)), and the latter from Hogbin 1939, who took it from a 'Roman Catholic hymn-book' (reprinted by Hall (1943), with the comment: 'Although parts of this poem

may have been "doctored" or written by the missionaries, it has a sufficiently authentic ring to be included in the texts by Melanesian rather than by European speakers').

(19) yumi sekan long taim mi go
mi no save sapos mi bagarap
balus i plai antap
mi ting sore
mi ting baimbai mi dai

yumi sekan long taim mi go
mi no save sapos mi bagarap
sip i sel long wara
mi ting sore
mi ting baimbai mi dai

(20) ples bilong mi i nambawan
mi laikim em tasol
mi ting long papa, mama tu
mi krai long haus bilong ol
mi wok long ples i longwe tru
mi stap nogut tasol
ples bilong mi i nambawan
mi laikim em tasol

ol wantok, barata, susa tu
longtaim i wetim mi
ol i salim planti tok i kam
ol i ting mi lus long si
nau mi kirap mi go long ples
mi no ken lusim moa
ples bilong mi i nambawan
mi laikim em tasol

The stricter metre, and the use of rhyme in example (20), should be especially noted, and contrasted with the forms of the undoubtedly indigenous creations. Probably in the same category are two short poems (or songs?) given by Murphy (1943):

(21) o kanai, kanai antap tru
yu drip tasol yu go
mi liklik manki lukim yu
mi sanap daunbilo

o kanai, kanai stap antap
naispela drip bilong yu
aiting yu lukim Deo stap
na yu laik stap klostu

(22) liklik pisin, pren bilong mi
kam sindaun klostu
mi no meknais, nau yu kam
kaikai fikus tu

liklik pisin, yu no pret
mi no holim spia
naispela pisin, nau yu kam
liklik manki hia

Examples of undisputed European writing in Pidgin will be cited in the next section.

An oral tradition in Pidgin narrative has not yet established itself. Comparatively few Pidgin texts by indigenous speakers have been published in any 'undoctored' way; some of the major collections to date are to be found in the Pidgin manuals of Laycock (1970b), Dutton (1973) and Wurm (1971). It should be noted, however, that most of these texts are in fact translations of vernacular stories, and are told in Pidgin only for the benefit of the European recorder; situations rarely arise (or, at least, have rarely been observed) where narratives are told in Pidgin to a predominantly indigenous audience. The texts of Hall (1943; Hall and Bateson 1944) are for the most part told by his European anthropologist informants, relying on memory or on field transcriptions, while a very early text of the Garden of Eden story, supposedly told by a Solomon Islander working on the sugarcane plantations in Queensland (London 1909, reprinted by Churchill (1911)) is very unreliable evidence of any sort of indigenous Pidgin. Nevertheless, even in these examples a Pidgin narrative style is discernible, a style whose major elements are taken from vernacular story-telling styles. Most notable of these elements is the linking of sentences by repetition of the previous verb, often introduced by orait, as in the following example from Laycock 1970b - repetitions italicised:

(23) Orait, i go long raunwara, pukpuk i ken kisim em, na bikpela snek i stap long wara, em i ken kisim em. *Orait, ol i kisim* i kam, smokim pinis, ol i putim gen, ol i go bek. *Ol i go bek*, ol i kisim, ol i kisim torosel na wonem samting, pukpuk, ol i siutim long supia. *Ol i siutim long supia*, orait, sapos dewel i kamap long wara, baimbai masalai long maunten i go daun kisim nau ...

This sentence-linking, which derives from the 'sentence-medial' verbs of non-Austronesian languages of Papua New Guinea, is also a major feature of Pidgin rhetoric - another field of indigenous literary creation which many visitors to Papua New Guinea have observed (especially at the meetings of Local Government Councils), but which has not been documented in any satisfactory way.

7.4.1.6.3. PIDGIN WRITING BY EUROPEANS

Europeans have long been active in Papua New Guinea in producing written material in Pidgin, but very little of their production comes under the heading of creative writing; most of it consists of functional manuals on health, hygiene, carpentry, administration news, cooking, politics, and theology. The quantity of such 'literature' is too vast to survey here; some items are listed in the bibliography to Laycock 1970a, and many more are included in the bibliography of Reinecke 1975. Missions of all denominations have translated into Pidgin various hymns and portions of the liturgy, two of the most widespread publications being the Catholic *Buk bilong beten end singsing bilong ol katolik* (1960), and the Protestant *Buk song bilong lotu long tok Pisin* (n.d.). From these, respectively, we may cite the translation of 'Silent Night' (24) and of 'O Come All Ye Faithful' (25):

(24) Krismas nait, santu nait!
ol i slip, star i lait
nau Maria i karim God Son
liklik Yesus kamdaun hia long graun
Yesus Peman i kam, Yesus Peman i kam.

Angelo nais en wait
ol i kam, ol i singsing long God
bringim gutpela tok bilong antap
Yesus Peman i kam, Yesus Peman i kam.

Betlehem nau i lait
wasman ol i kirap i go kwik
painim, lotuim Yesus long krib
Yesus Peman i kam, Yesus Peman i kam.

nau mi go, mi no wet
mi laik lukim long dispela nait
liklik Yesus i gut, i orait
Yesus Peman i kam, Yesus Peman i kam.

(25) Kam ologeta kristen
kam long krismas moning
yumi laik tingting long Betlehem
yumi laik tingting long pikinini bilong God
kam sing Aleluya (3)
long Kraist Jisas

Olgeta ensel
mekim gutpela song
ol i liptimapim nem bilong God antap
em i salim pikinini bilong helpim yumi
kam sing Aleluya (3)
long Kraist Jisas

Noteworthy in these productions is the differing forms of words like *'Jesus'* (Yesus/Jisas) and *'angel'* (angelo/ensel), but such denominational differences in the use of Pidgin are gradually disappearing. (Baker (1944) castigates the competing mission orthographies then in use.)

Perhaps the most influential of mission writings have been the Bible translations, not so much the series of excerpts that formed the *Liklik Katolik Baibel* (1934) (though this and its predecessors must have been familiar to thousands of Niuginians) as the more recent complete translation of the New Testament (*Nupela Testamen* (1969)). This was the first major publication to use the new 'standardised' Pidgin orthography. The same orthography is followed religiously by the directors of Kristen Pres, the major Pidgin publishing house in Papua New Guinea, which puts out an extensive list of religious and educational works in Pidgin. The Summer Institute of Linguistics at Ukarumpa also publishes in Pidgin as well as vernaculars, and produced, in the popular *Manki i pas long tais* (1971), what was probably the first comic-book in Pidgin,[4] albeit with a religious content.

Outside of mission and administration propaganda, little creative writing by Europeans has reached indigenous speakers of Pidgin. A few brief translations have been undertaken by Europeans as *tours-de-force*, or as demonstrations that Pidgin is not an 'inadequate' language; noteworthy among these translations are a version of a passage from Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*[5] by Gaywood (1951), the myth of Theseus and Ariadne retold by Hall (1959), and Murphy's (1943) translation of Mark Anthony's speech from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, a portion of which follows:

(26) Pren, man bilong Rom, wantok, harim nau. Mi kam tasol long planim Kaesar. Mi no ken beten longen. Sapos sampela wok bilong wanpela man i stret; sampela i no stret; na man i dai; ol i wailes long wok i no stret tasol. Gutpela wok bilongen i slip; i lus nating long graun wantaim long kalopa. Pasin bilong yumi man. Maski Kaesar tu, gutpela wok i slip.

Along the same lines, my own translation of *Macbeth* has been completed and will eventually be prepared for publication.

Direct creative writing, as distinct from translation, is less in evidence. Dutton (1973) gives the following song written by Mike Goodson,[6] an agricultural officer in Papua New Guinea:

(27) Mipela mipela didiman
husat meri laik i ken
ol i kolim mipela nambawan man
o mipela didiman

mipela wok long nait na de
na mipela no gat dola-de
mipela no gat gutpela pe
o mipela didiman

mipela save go wok bus
kaikai pinis na mi smok brus
tingting long olgeta samting i lus
o mipela didiman

kiap i ting mi rabisman
mi holim meri long tupela han
sapos em i laik kotim mi i ken
o mipela didiman

o hapkas pikinini ples pulap
inap long go long wanpela trak
maski long moa, ating em inap
o mipela didiman

Laycock (1972b) has published one Pidgin song in *Wantok* newspaper, and has a number of others unpublished. But by and large Europeans have hesitated to enter the field of creative writing in Pidgin, perhaps fearing invidious comparisons with native Niuginian writing (see below, 7.4.1.6.4.). Nevertheless, there remains a great deal of scope for European contributions to the Pidgin literature of Papua New Guinea, a fact which was long ago recognised by Hall (1954):

> Potential authors might be found among both Europeans and natives. Europeans with the requisite technical and cultural knowledge and with adequate command of Neo-Melanesian might well be encouraged to undertake literary projects, either as a part of educational or missionary work, or as a spare-time recreational occupation.

At a Pidgin conference held at the University of Papua New Guinea in September 1973, a literature sub-committee strongly expressed the view that there should be greater variety in the type of reading material available in Pidgin ('humour, biography, fables, language games, etc., as well as instructional subjects'); much of this variety could well come from the efforts of Europeans. Two members of the audience suggested that the list could well include erotica and as a step in that direction I offer the following translation I made of the English bawdy ballad 'Sam Hall', and disseminated in the Sepik area in 1959:

(28) O nem bilong mi Samol, yes Samol (2)
O nem bilong mi Samol
na mi gat wanpela bol
em i inap long pakim ol
bladi sit, bladi sit
em i inap long pakim ol
bladi sit

mi laik plei long meri long nait ...
tasol man bilongen i no laik
na bol i lus long pait ...

o kiap em i kam ...
na i kotim mi long san -
em i ken siubim kot long bam ...

nau mi stap kalabus ...
na nau mi nogat brus
na bai ol moni i lus ...

o mi wok long katim gras ...
na pater i go pas -
em i man bilong pakim as ...

o bai mi pinistaim ...
mi laik kisim misis traim -
mi gat moni inap long baim ...

o mi laik go long Lae ...
brukim kontrak, ronewe
na les long san olde ...

o klosap bai mi dai ...
kisim ples paia baimbai -
tasol mi no ken i krai ...

An even earlier bawdy limerick is that cited by Hall (1943), as being written by the anthropologist John M. Whiting:[7]

(29) klostu long as bilong kokonas-tri
wanpela meri kamap long mi
sindaun long gras
i gat bikpela as
i tok i laik puspus long mi

7.4.1.6.4. INDIGENOUS CREATIVE WRITING

Self-conscious creative writing in Pidgin by local-born authors is a comparatively new phenomenon; outlets for publication in this field have been available only since 1969. The major impetus in this field was provided by Mr Ulli Beier, who held an appointment in the teaching of creative writing at the University of Papua New Guinea from 1967 to 1972.[8] Although Mr Beier's main interest was in the promotion of writing in English, and his knowledge of Pidgin was insufficient for him to make valid critical judgements, the publications he initiated (*Kovave* and *Papua Pocket Poets*) provided a medium for the expression of Pidgin writings, and Mr Beier's encouragement ensured that they were published. The first (pilot issue) of *Kovave* carried two songs in New Guinea Pidgin collected by students (as well as songs in Solomon Islands and Australian Aboriginal Pidgin), and also the first published Pidgin play, 'Em rod bilong kago', by Leo Hannet (of which a longish extract was reprinted by Laycock (1970a)). Most subsequent issues have included at least one or two Pidgin poems, but the later ones were written rather than 'collected'; these include two poems which became deservedly popular, and which have been issued on posters by the Creative Arts Centre[9] in Port Moresby. The poems are 'O meri wantok' by Bede Dus Mapun (*Kovave* 3/2 1972) and 'Moa! Moa! Yet!' by Jerry Kavop (*Kovave* 4/1 1972); the first is given here (30), with a 'reply' by Peni Bryning (31) (*Kovave* 4/1 1972):

(30) o meri Papua
o meri Buka
o meri Nugini
o meri Hailen
o meri wantok mi sore long yu

yu lukim Astralia man i draivim kar
yu lukim Amerika man i draivim trak
yu lukim Inglan man i ronim motabaik
yu lukim Nuzilan man i kikim baisikol
yu sanap yu lukluk na yu sek
o meri wantok mi sore long yu

yu lukim Papua man i raun long lek
yu lukim Buka man i ron long lek
yu lukim Nugini man wokabaut long lek
yu lukim Hailan man i taitim long lek
yu harim blak man i tok 'monin meri wantok'
yu tanim pes na tok 'hemarai lasi'
yu taitim bel na tok 'nogat sem blo yu'
o meri wantok mi sore long yu

o meri wantok
bipo maus bilong yu i save braun
nau maus bilong yu i ret
bipo gras bilong yu i save sanap lus
nau yu pulim i go tait
bipo susu bilong yu i save slek
nau i sanap tait olsem yet
yu lukluk long glas na tok
'inap long twenti dola wan drop!'
o meri wantok mi sore long yu

lapun man bilong Inglan i tok 'Nansei!'
yangpela man bilong Astralia lukim yu na i tok
'my dalen black en beauriful
I'll mek you like kween of heaven above'
yu harim na yu tingse i tru
o meri wantok mi sore long yu

mi sanap mi lukluk tasol
mi sindaun mi tingting tasol
o meri wanskin mi sore long yu
o meri wantok mi sore tumas long yu

(31) o man wantok mi sore long yu
mi sore yet long yu
yu lukim meri Astralia
yu lukim meri Amerika
yu lukim meri Inglan
na yu seksek longen

o man wantok mi sore long yu
yu go long piksa na yu seksek
yu lukim waitpela susu
yu lukim baksait i stap nating
yu lukim longpela waitpela gras
na yu seksek nogut tru

o man wantok yu mekim wanem long meri wantok?
yu givim pikinini longen
yu givim planti wok longen
yu paitim em sapos kaikai i no kamap kwiktaim
yu larim em long haus na go dring bia -
o sore-sore long yu!

o man wantok mi sore long yu
yu wokabaut olsem kakaruk man
yu putim klos olsem kauboi
yu go long piksa, yu go spak nabaut
long nait yu drim long meri i narakain -
o man wantok mi sore yet long yu!

Pidgin poems can also be found in some of the small booklets issued as *Papua Pocket Poets*, especially those edited by Hannet (1970) and Tawali (1971); the first of these contains only 'folk' songs, and has been mentioned above, while the second is the most important collection of Pidgin poems to date. Space permits only the citation of Tau Peruka's 'Nansei' (32), also published in *Pangu Pati Nius* June 1973, and by Dutton (1973), and a poem by Kila R. Wari on the ever-popular theme of 'Meri Wantok' (33):

(32) mi katim kona long Koki Maket
mi lukim olo man na meri salim
buai, daka, pis na banana
mi no seksek
mi lukim meri i gat longpela gras
ei! nansei!

mi sanap long nambis bilong Ela Bis
mi lukim olo masta waswas
mi no seksek
mi lukim olo misis ol i kalap kalap nabaut
na openim lek bilong ol
ei! nansei!

mi sindaun long hapsait bilong Braun Riva
mi lukim bikpela pukpuk i kamap
mi no seksek
mi lukim meri i rausim dres bilongen
waitpela susu bilongen i sanap stret
ei! nansei!

mi wokabaut long klostu long swiming pul
mi lukim sangana bilong ol man
mi no seksek
mi lukim waitpela sangana bilong ol meri
ei! nansei!

mi raun raun long Burns Philp
mi lukim ol nupela samting
mi no seksek
mi lukim ol meri wokabaut wantaim sotpela dres
as bilong ol i seksek narakain
ei! nansei!

(33) meri wantok
nogat arapela
inap winim yu
yu tasol, meri wantok

susu i sanap
olosem retpela maunten
i sanap taim san i hatim
na i brukim lewa bilong mi
em yu tasol meri wantok

ai bilong yu olosem paia i lait
gras bilong yu i blak tru
na i luk swit mo
tasol skin bilong yu i kol
olosem kolwara
na i mekim mi i hangamap
tru long yu
o, meri wantok

The number of Pidgin periodicals has increased in recent years; the principal ones are *Wantok*, *Bougainville Nius*, *Nius bilong yumi*, *Pangu Pati Nius*, *Poroman*, *Luksave*, *Toktok bilong haus ov Asembli*, and *Raunabaut*.[10] However, these rarely carry contributions that can be regarded as creative writing, apart from the letters to the editor and

the occasional traditional story ('stori bilong ol tumbuna'); this may be due to a lack of submissions rather than to editorial policy. In a somewhat different category is *Papua New Guinea Writing* (formerly *New Guinea Writing*), a journal produced by the Literature Bureau of the Department of Information and Extension Services for furthering creative writing in Papua New Guinea. Most contributions are in English, but contributions in Pidgin are accepted. This journal is one of the few outlets for Pidgin prose; issues 2 (December 1970), 6 (June 1972), 9 (March 1973), 11 (September 1973) and 13 (March 1974) contain Pidgin stories, and issue 2 also contains a review in Pidgin of Hannet 1970. Issue 11 (September 1973) carried an editorial on the desirability of continuing to publish Pidgin contributions (Boschman 1973); this brought a comment, in a letter to the editor in issue 12 (December 1973), that Pidgin literature would be taken more seriously if the standard orthography were adhered to. Issue 13, however, continued to print Pidgin with erratic spelling. (Of the above-mentioned periodicals, only *Wantok*, and perhaps *Luksave*, consistently uses the standard orthography.)

The Literature Bureau award prizes annually for creative writing; prior to 1972 awards were given for Pidgin poetry only, but since 1972 there has been a section for stories in Pidgin and Hiri Motu (sponsored by the Summer Institute of Linguistics). In that year 34 stories in Pidgin, and one in Hiri Motu, were submitted; the 1973 competition drew 122 Pidgin stories (and none in Hiri Motu), which indicates a growing interest in the use of Pidgin as a medium for creative writing. Other institutions, such as Kristen Pres, have also attempted to promote creative writing in Pidgin, and a course for potential authors was held in 1973 by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (reported by Cates and Cates (1975)). Such courses are expected to continue, and will provide training for indigenous writers, as well as publication opportunities.

There is, however, little provision for Pidgin plays; these, if submitted to the Literature Bureau, are judged in the English section. Few Pidgin plays have been published at all: the exceptions comprise only Hannet 1969, Namaliu 1970 and Tokome 1973. Some plays exist in mimeographed form only; these include Rabbie Namaliu's lively satire 'Maski Kaunsil', and Kakah Kais' 'The Cornerstone Topples'. Pidgin plays are occasionally performed at educational institutions in Papua New Guinea - such as the University, the Teachers' Colleges, and high schools - and receive an enthusiastic welcome from the audiences. Drama is obviously a field of writing which deserves further encouragement, as performances bring home to thousands of people the potential of Pidgin as a literary language, whether or not the plays are published for the benefit of the literate minority.

7.4.1.6.5. FURTHER OBSERVATIONS

In spite of a certain amount of interest in creative writing in Pidgin, it is nevertheless clear that the potential audience is as yet fairly small and unsophisticated, and the potential writers as yet unsure of the language as a medium. Nevertheless, the influence of Pidgin as a vehicle for 'grass-roots' communication is making itself widely felt, even in the more heavily promoted courses for creative writing in the English language (reviewed by May (1971)). Authors of Papua New Guinea now feel free to use Pidgin expressions and dialogue in works written otherwise in English, and Pidgin calques in English writings are not uncommon. There exists a large list of Pidgin words which are familiar to most people (expatriates and indigenes) who know Papua New Guinea, and these convey concepts not easily expressible in English with the same overtones; the list includes amamas, bagarap, banis, bikhet, bilas, birua, buai, galip, garamut, giaman, gris, kokomo, kongkong, kundu, lapun, lus, manki, maski, muruk, pamuk, poisin, rabis, sanguma, sore, susu, tambaran, tambu, tumbuna, wantok, and at least twice as many items again (see also Wolfers 1969). A number of other less common Pidgin words (for example aiai, aibika, amberoi, aupa, dadap, hatwara, pangal, tangir) express indigenous flora, fauna, or foodstuffs, for which there are rarely convenient English equivalents. Authors in Papua New Guinea are freely sprinkling their English writings with such words, thus giving to their works a flavour that is uniquely Niuginian.

But it is not just as a source of local colour that Pidgin will exist in Papua New Guinea; given the right sort of encouragement, and opportunities for inexpensive publication, the beginnings of Pidgin writings that have been cited in this chapter may yet be seen to flower into an extensive literature that expresses the aspirations of the people of this new nation to a degree that writings in other languages, whether imported (like English) or restricted (like the indigenous languages), can never hope to achieve.

N O T E S

1. Translations of, and annotations to, the Pidgin extracts cited will be found in the Appendix.

2. In many cases, the spelling is given in an anglicised form. As far as possible, I have adjusted all spellings throughout this chapter, to conform with the new standardised Pidgin orthography (Mihalic and Sievert 1970; Mihalic 1971); this is done not without misgivings of presumption as far as the printed writings of indigenous writers of Papua New Guinea are concerned, and I offer them my apologies for having done this. However, it was thought better to be consistent, and the author also had in mind overseas readers whose familiarity with Pidgin is limited and who would probably find it easier to appreciate the Pidgin literature samples if they are presented here in the standard orthography in which dictionaries are available.

The end result of my efforts is not always grammatical Pidgin, especially in some of the texts noted by Europeans; but I have refrained, in the current state of uncertainty of the possible variations within Pidgin, from making any changes beyond orthographical ones. Repetitions of lines are indicated by a following number.

3. Pidgin is a difficult language to rhyme in, owing to the relatively small number of monosyllabic words which can occur at the end of a line, and to a paucity of rhyming words in polysyllabic words.

4. A more recent comic book is another mission publication, *Laip bilong Jisas* (n.d.). Walt Disney's comic strip 'Scamp' was once run in both English and Pidgin in *Wantok* newspaper, but the main Pidgin comic strip of that paper is now Lee Falk and Sy Barry's 'The Phantom' (see 7.7.3.). Other comic strips have appeared sporadically in other publications.

5. Not a good example of the 'adequacy' of Pidgin. The English translation used takes up 12 lines, the Pidgin version 39!

6. Dutton erroneously gives the surname as **Goodman**.

7. Laycock (1970a), misreading Hall's text, mistakenly took this to be a genuine indigenous song cited by Hall.

8. Professor Beier is now Director of the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, and responsible for the administration of many cultural activities, including creative writing.

9. Now the National Arts Centre.

10. Some of these have ceased publication since this chapter was originally written.

APPENDIX
Translation of, and Annotations, to Pidgin Citations

Translator's Note

Translating from Pidgin into English involves making a number of decisions, not least among which are the choice of tense in verbs, and number in nouns (features which are normally unmarked in Pidgin). Further, songs and poems in Pidgin achieve a (perhaps deliberate) structural ambiguity, by often suppressing the subject or object. I have tried to make my choices on the basis of the context, but certainly do not feel that my translations are the only possible ones.

A further trap into which the translator is commonly led is that of using the English words from which the Pidgin words are derived; this assists the reader who does not know Pidgin to see how the Pidgin text is constructed, but it has the disadvantage of missing important shades of meaning. I have therefore translated freely in this respect, preferring to preserve the sense and flavour of the original, rather than its syntactic and etymological make-up. For the same reason, I have not felt obliged to always translate the same Pidgin lexeme in exactly the same way in English.

The translations nevertheless are as accurate as I can make them, somewhat at the expense of literary style; I would not make quite the same choices if I were trying to render the Pidgin originals as English poems.

(1) *My master, come back quickly. I like taro; I like pineapple.*

(2) *The SIGISMUND and the SEESTERN are waiting a long time for the ROLAND to go to Rabaul. The cabin-boys know nothing; lock up the ROLAND, lock up the SIGISMUND, lock up the SEESTERN.* [Two vessels are waiting for a third, which is delayed.]

(3) *O engineer, start the motor; prepare to up-anchor; the motor runs; o engineer.*

(4) *When I left Vanimo, I slept at sea; the sun went down, I looked back, but could not see Vanimo. I slept on the deck of the TARA, and thought of my mother and sister.*

(5) *The full moon is here, it is the time of the single men; single-o, 'promise' single-o.*

(6) *Standing on Wewak mountain, I looked down at the sea; I was sad, and I cried.*

(7) *The women who work as nurses dash along the road, the veils on their heads blowing in the wind.*

(8) *You, my girlfriend, are deceiving me; you write my name on the inside of your thigh.*

(9) *The women of Matupi sell tomatoes [sexual favours]; they are keen to get sixpence.*

(10) *A woman wrote me a letter, saying to go down and wait for her; I got up in the middle of the night to go down and wait for her, and I waited and waited in vain until dawn.*

(11) *Short here, long here; I stood and looked at the low tide.*

(12) *While I was at Moem barracks, I received a letter from my village, informing me that my father had died. I was sad, and I cried; I broke my uniform. I was sad, and I cried; I broke my rifle.*

(13) *As a love-charm you use white peroxide, and upset the village; who is it for? But you should not be afraid.*

(14) *Sago-woman, the hawk will catch you; you run away to get married, and the hawk will catch you.*

(15) *The BUSAMA caught fire; Wewak announced it on the radio.* [The BUSAMA was a coastal vessel whose cargo of oil caught fire and exploded off Wewak in 1958.]

(16) *We are happy today at this party, we are very happy this night.*

(17) *I pity myself, the young cowboy [flashy dresser]; it is your fault. Twice you called me just a kid; I am sad and I cry. I*

pity myself; I don't know how old I am. It is your fault; I pity myself for loving you; I am sad and I cry.

(18) *I used to work for the company; I was idle, and the white men fired me. I shall go to Kalakan, where the women like me. I work by day, I work by night; I work excessively, and pity myself; I would like to run away home, to my own area. I keep looking at one woman, and she keeps looking at me; I tell her day and night: 'Come along with me'. The two of us will run away, a long way, to my area; I like my own kind of food, but I don't like the company.*

(19) *Let us shake hands as I leave; for all I know, I shall come to grief. The plane flies high, and my heart is heavy; I think I shall die.*

Let us shake hands as I leave; for all I know, I shall come to grief. The ship sails on the water, and my heart is heavy; I think I shall die.

(20) *My village is best, it is the only place I like; I think of my father and mother, and cry [when I think] about their house. I work in a distant place, where I am not happy; my village is best, it is the only place I like.*

My friends, brothers, and sisters, have long awaited me; they send many messages, and think I have been drowned. Now I shall get up and go home, and never leave it again; my village is best, it is the only place I like.

(21) *Seagull, seagull, high above, you drift along; I stand below, a little boy, and watch you. Seagull, seagull, high above, your drifting is beautiful; I think you can see God, and wish to approach him.*

(22) *Little bird, my friend, come and sit near me; I make no noise, and you come and eat the figs. Little bird, do not fear; I have no spear. Nice bird, come to this little boy.*

(23) *Well, they go to the pond, they can get crocodiles, and the big snakes that live by the water. They get them, smoke them, put them aside, and go back. They go back, catch some more, catch tortoises and all kinds of things, crocodiles, they spear them. They spear them; but if the spirit comes up in the water, the demon of the mountain will go down and get them now.*

(24) *Christmas Eve, holy night! All are sleeping, the stars are shining; Mary bears God the Son, little Jesus comes down to earth; Jesus the Redeemer comes.*

The beautiful white angels come and sing of God, bringing good news from heaven; Jesus the Redeemer comes.

Bethlehem is now lit up; the shepherds arise and go quickly to find and worship Jesus in the crib; Jesus the Redeemer comes. Now I shall go without delay; in this night I wish to see the good and gracious Jesus; Jesus the Redeemer comes.

(25) *Come, all Christians; come on Christmas morning, and think of Bethlehem, and the son of God. Come and sing Hallelujah to Christ Jesus.*

All the angels sing a sweet chorus, exalting the name of God on High, who sent his son to help us. Come and sing Hallelujah to Christ Jesus.

(26) *Friends, Romans, companions, listen now. I come only to bury Caesar; I shall not pray for him. If some of a man's deeds are righteous, and others unrighteous, and the man dies, people gossip only about the unrighteous deeds. His good works sleep, and are lost in the earth, with the mourning. This is how we men behave. The same goes for Caesar; his good deeds are dormant.*

(27) *We are the agricultural workers; any woman who wants to, may. They call us the best of men; we are the agricultural workers.*

We work night and day, and do not even receive a dollar a day; we do not receive good pay, we agricultural workers.

We go and work in the bush, eat our food and smoke, thinking of all the good things we are missing; we are the agricultural workers.

The administrative officer thinks we are worthless. I reach out for women with both hands; if he wants to prosecute me, he's welcome! We are the agricultural workers.

The place is full of half-caste children, enough to fill a truck - to hell with more, I think that's enough! We are the agricultural workers.

(28) *O my name is Sam Hall, yes Sam Hall - and I've only got one ball; that's enough to fuck you all, bloody shit.*

I wanted to sleep with a woman at night, but her husband objected, and I lost my ball in the fight.

The administrative officer came and prosecuted me next day; he can stick his court up his bum.

Now I am in prison, without tobacco, and soon my money will be finished.

I work at cutting the grass, and the priest goes past; he is a sodomite.

Soon my time will be up; I should like to try a white woman - I've got enough money to buy one.

I should like to go to Lae, break my contract, and run away, and idle in the sun all day long.

Soon now I shall die, and go to hell - but I shan't cry.

(29) *Near the base of a coconut palm a woman came up to me; she sat down on the grass (she had a big arse) and requested intercourse with me.*

(30) *O women of Papua, women of Buka, New Guinea women, women of the Highlands, I pity you! You look at the Australians driving cars, the Americans driving trucks, the English riding motorcycles, the New Zealanders pedalling bicycles; you stand and watch them, and desire them. O women of my people, I pity you!*

You look at the Papuans going on foot, you look at the Bukas running on foot, you look at the New Guineans walking on foot, you look at the Highlanders striding on foot; you hear a black man say 'Good morning, woman of my people', and you turn your head and say 'You have no shame'. You draw yourself in and say 'You have no shame'. O women of my people, I pity you!

O women of my people, your mouths used to be brown; now your mouths are red. Your hair used to flow loosely, now you bind it tight; your breasts once were slack, but now they stand up firm. You look in the mirror and say 'Worth twenty dollars a drop!' O women of my people, I pity you!

Old men from England say 'Good show!'; young men from Australia look at you and say 'My darling black and beautiful, I'll make you like the queen of heaven above'. You listen and think they are telling the truth - o women of my people, I am sorry for you!

I just stand and observe, and sit and think. O women of my colour, I pity you; o women of my people, I pity you greatly.

(31) *O men of my people, I pity you; I really pity you. You look at the Australian women, the American women, the English women, and you desire them. O men of my people, I pity you; you go to the pictures and you get excited. You look at the white breasts, the bare backsides, and the long blond hair, and you get as excited as can be.*

And, o men of my people, what do you do with your own women? You give them babies, you give them a great deal of work; you hit

them if the food is not ready quickly, you leave them in the house and go and drink beer - o how I pity you!

O men of my people, I pity you; you walk around like young cockerels, and dress up like cowboys; you go to the pictures, and get drunk all over the place - and in the night you dream of a different kind of woman.

O men of my people, I really pity you!

(32) *I was fooling around at Koki market, looking at the men and women selling betelnut, lime, fish, and bananas - and I didn't turn a hair; I looked at the women with long hair - Hey! That's something!*

I stood on the strand at Ela Beach, watching the white men bathing - and I didn't turn a hair; I looked at the white women gadding about, and opening their legs - Hey! That's something!

I sat down on the side of Brown River, and saw a big crocodile come up - and I didn't turn a hair; I saw a woman take off her dress, her white breasts standing up straight - Hey! That's something!

I walked about by the swimming pool, and I saw the thighs of the men - and I didn't turn a hair; I saw the white thighs of the women - Hey! That's something!

I was roaming around the Burns Philp store, looking at all the new things - and I didn't turn a hair; I looked at the women in miniskirts, their buttocks shaking like nobody's business - Hey! That's something!

(33) *Woman of my people, there is none that excels you; you stand alone, woman of my people. Your breasts stand up like red mountains; they stand when the sun warms them, and break my heart - that is you alone, woman of my people. Your eyes are like burning fires, your hair is really black, and looks very attractive; but your skin is cold, like cold water, and it really attracts me to you, o woman of my people.*

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