

THE HULI LANGUAGE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

by

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SUMMARY

This thesis describes the language of the Huli speech community of the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea.

The first chapter situates the speech community in its historical setting, and refers to previous, mainly non-linguistic, studies.

The second chapter situates the community in its geographical and 'traditional' setting, recording putative migrations and dialectal variations.

The third chapter describes segmental phonology at a level of detail not previously given in accounts of the language, while the fourth chapter presents a tentative exploration of prosodic features.

The fifth chapter describes verbs, the sixth adverbials, and the seventh nominals: in each instance there is an emphasis on morphology and morphophonemic processes hitherto unrecorded for Huli.

The eighth chapter describes word complexes, and the ninth group complexes, using a systemic-functional approach that establishes a descriptive framework that indicates useful insights into the pragmatics of the language.

Chapter ten selects and explores, in varying degrees, semantic features that are typologically interesting, while chapter eleven re-focusses the thesis on sociolinguistic issues.

The twelveth chapter presents a dozen texts, which it interprets and comments on in the light of linguistic and sociological descriptions presented previously.

The appendices that follow give the data bases for some of the descriptions given in the thesis body.

The body of the thesis is concerned with describing the language as it is being created and used by living, real, people. Hence, the language forms at each level are described and interpreted in relation to their functions in creating meaning. This has necessitated presenting in some detail phonological and morphological data that need to be described if the language is to be seen as the growing, changing expression of the living society that uses and creates it.

CERTIFICATE

Some preliminary findings concerning social and language change were used in an assignment for my M.A. gained at the University of Sydney, but otherwise none of the ideas or data presented in this thesis has been drawn upon or used in persuit of a higher degree at any other university or institution.

Signed *G.C.J. Lomas.*

G.C.J. Lomas

PREAMBLE

SCOPE

This thesis presents an overview of the Huli language, describing the phonology and lexico-grammar in relation to the socio-cultural context in which they function. Its objective is to present the language as it is spoken and used in society.

This scope and intent has meant that choices have had to be made about which areas to expand and discuss, and what level of detail to use in each case. Thus the phonology and morphology are given weighting in chapters 3 to 7, since a detailed consideration of these is necessary if other areas, such as discourse, are to be usefully explored.

Weighting has also been given to a discussion of word and group complexes, since these are not only higher level exponents of the phonological and morphological systems, but also provide insights into areas such as switch-reference and text.

Inevitably, given the scope of the thesis, certain areas have received less exhaustive treatment than they deserve. One reason for this has been the very substantial data that would be required if discussion were to be carried further: this is the case with, eg, tone and intonation, and politeness strategies. Another reason has been the constraints of time and space, which have meant that some areas - eg, tense and aspect - could be described only briefly, and could not be fully explored.

A substantial factor in the 'editing' process that I am describing has been myself, and what I perceive as essential or useful for this account. Thus, my interest in vowel harmony and my concern with social and language change are both reflected in these pages. However, their inclusion is not

arbitrary, but based on a perception that each is, in its own way, important for understanding the polysemous nature of Huli language structures.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I owe my greatest debt of gratitude to my wife, Ann, for

her constant support and encouragement, and for 'making space' in our life together for me to complete this work.

CONVENTIONS

1. The generative phonology notation is taken from Hyman (1975), although the symbols used in phonetic transcriptions are those suggested by the International Phonetic Association (IPA). Exceptions to this are: the retroflexed lateral flap, [ɺ], which is taken from Ladefoged (1982:156); the high lax vowels [ɪ] and [ʊ], and the palatal glide [j], which are taken from Hyman (1975:241).

Other exceptions are noted as they occur.

2. Huli shares with other Papuan languages a complex and exceedingly rich verbal system, confronting the linguist with a bewildering array of forms and functions that challenge – and, in some instances, beggar – description. I have endeavoured not to add unnecessarily to the already large inventory of terms coined in the service of linguistic descriptions, and have adopted and adapted labels used by others where this has been appropriate. Instances of this are allative, adessive and inessive, borrowed from Scott (1978); continuative from Holzknecht (1986); and cessative, adapted from Bruce (1984). However, labels such as ubiquitive, precautionary and permissive have resisted all efforts to replace them, and have been allowed to remain.

3. The text is broken up into numbered sections and subsections. When cross-referencing occurs, it is intended that the number given should include its subordinates. For example, the reference 5.4 includes 5.4.1 through to the final sections and subsections of 5.4.8.

4. When presenting Huli examples I have generally tried to

supply glosses that are apt for each instance. However, as the description of the language progresses, it becomes important for glosses to give full and accurate access to the translation process if examples are to serve as useful illustrations. Therefore, most of the examples after chapter 5, and some before and within that chapter, carry up to four interlinear glosses, the final gloss being an equivalent translation.

5. Abbreviations commonly used throughout the thesis are:

A	adjunct	L1	first language
A-	non-polar interrogative	L2	second language
AD	adversative	LOC	locative
ADN	adnominal	MOD	modal
ADV	adverbial	NEG	negative
AFFX	affix	NM	numerative
APV	adjunct + pro-verb	NOM	nominal
ASP	aspect	NUM	numerative
AUX	auxiliary	OBLIG	obligative
BEN	benefactive	P	{ plural
C	consonant		{ Tok Pisin
C1/2/3/	social classes 1/2/3	PAST	past
CAUS	causative	PEV	pre-event
CESS	cessative	PERM	permissive
CL	classifier	POL	polar
CLS	clause	POS	positive
COM	comitative	POSB	possibilitative
COMP	completive	POSS	possessive
CONS	consecutive	PREC	precautionary
CONT	continuative	PRES	present
CUST	customary	PRFX	prefix
D	dual	PURP	purposive
DC	deictic	PV	pro-verb
DEF	definitive	Q	interrogative
DES	desiderative	QL	qualifier
DET	determiner	R	recipient-undergoer
DID	didactive	S	{ syllable
DS	different subject		{ singular
E	English	SIM	simultaneous
EP	epithet	SIM1	simultaneous 1
ENC	enclitic	SIM2	simultaneous 2
ERG	ergative	SIMP	simple
EV	existential verb	SPAT	spatial
EVN	event	SR	switch-reference
EX	existential	SS	same subject
EXCL	exclamative	STM	stem
EXH	exhortative	SUFX	suffix
FIN	finite	T	tone
FUT	future	TEMP	temporal
H	Huli	TH	thing
HAB	habitual	UBIQ	ubiquitive
IMP	imperative	V	vowel
INT	interrogative (A-form)	VB	verb

