

X. Introduction

HOWARD McKAUGHAN

The bulk of the descriptive studies of the Auyana-Usarufa has been done by Darlene L. Bee of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. References and acknowledgment appear in the first footnote of each chapter. Her studies are of the Usarufa, spoken by some 1,000 persons. Data are from the village of Kaagu (Orona). The Auyana, a name covering the dialect spoken in the villages of Kosena, Arora, and Asempa among others and the dialect spoken in the village of Kawaina, is summarized by McKaughan and Marks. The collection of texts is also from the Auyana. The map of the Eastern Highlands Study Area shows the Auyana, north of the Awa (see Map 2). Villages of Asempa (5) and Kawaina (6) are located as is the area for Kosena and Usarufa.

Dr. Bee prefers that Usarufa be called a language rather than a dialect. Her studies do indicate a substantial difference between the two, and though Usarufa is more closely related to Auyana than to any of the other study languages (Awa, Gadsup, and Tairora), it may be as well to regard the Auyana-Usarufa as a subfamily rather than dialects of the same language. Criteria for establishing language versus dialect are yet to be formalized to the satisfaction of all. In this case, the differences between Usarufa and Auyana are more substantial grammatically, perhaps, than the differences between the various Awa dialects. The people insist on a difference, and though in this respect native reaction is dangerous, we will stick to the two names, Auyana and Usarufa. However, there is not this kind of difference between Kosena and Auyana, the language spoken in the village of Kosena being little different from that in Arora from where the Kosena people migrated within remembered history.

McKaughan and Marks summarize the Auyana phonology in the following

chapter, so nothing more need be said here. The consonant and vowel system of Auyana is compared to the other languages in Chapter XXXV. The notes on the Auyana grammar in McKaughan and Marks are augmented substantially by the treatment by Bee on Usarufa. The phonological studies of Usarufa are of special interest in that they highlight (A) tone, a newly discovered feature of New Guinea languages; and (B) distinctive features, an approach not used by the other writers, new in its application to New Guinea languages. Bee's article in Part V (Chap. XXXVI) on comparative problems is also of interest along this line since she comments on the distinctive features in the other languages of the study group.

The original publishers of Chapters XII and XIII are indicated in the footnotes. The only difference between the original publications and those given here is the use of an orthography that is consistent with the other descriptions where it does not alter the information given.

The texts will afford an opportunity for further analysis and description of Auyana, and also give the reader-analyst an opportunity to compare Auyana and Usarufa.

XIII. *Usarufa Distinctive Features and Phonemes*

DARLENE BEE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. *General*

Usarufa reflects many of the features which are common to the languages classified by Wurm (1962a) as the East New Guinea Highland Stock.¹ It is therefore hoped that a presentation of some of the aspects of *Usarufa* phonemics and morphophonemics will give insight into problems of analysis faced by those studying other languages in the stock. The specific contribution which this paper hopes to make is in the area of distinctive features analysis which has heretofore been lacking in the descriptive statements of New Guinea languages.

Problems of interpretation and analysis are discussed in three of the articles in *Studies in New Guinea Linguistics*.² The problems are basically the same in all three articles: (A) interpretation of contoid and vocoid clusters and (B) the decision as to which if any of a series of phonetic variants to unite as single phonemes when a given variant is in identical complementary distribution with more than one other phonetically similar variant. Rosemary Young (1962) suggests several interpretational possibilities and selects the one most suitable for her purposes of comparison. R. and R. Nicholson (1962) go more deeply into the problems involved

¹ This paper was originally submitted as a Master's Thesis at Indiana University, Bloomington, and is based on materials collected under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. It was later published as pp. 39-68 in *Papers in New Guinea Linguistics*, No. 4, Linguistic Circle of Canberra Publications (Series A: Occasional Papers, No. 6) (Australian National University, 1965).

² Oceania Linguistic Monographs No. 6, *Studies in New Guinea Linguistics* by members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, New Guinea Branch, published by University of Sydney, Australia, 1962.

and show the implications of two different interpretations of the Fore system. Bee and Glasgow (see Chap. XII) rely heavily on pattern pressure and phonetic similarity for their conclusions. None of these analyses consider distinctive features and therefore miss some of the clues that such an approach might offer. This paper attempts to present the Usarufa material from a distinctive feature point of view and to show how such an approach does offer analytical clues and yet leave some areas open to nonunique solutions.

The Usarufa speaking area is located in a pocket surrounded by Kamano, Kanite, Fore, and a small segment of Auyana speakers. All of these languages except the Auyana have been classified by Wurm as members of language families distinct from Usarufa. Nevertheless most adult Usarufa speakers speak at least one of the three more distantly related languages and many speak all three. Contrariwise very few Fore, Kamano, or Kanite speakers are able to speak Usarufa. Also of note is the fact that except for the residents of the village of Ilafo, on whose ground a small group of Auyana speakers have settled, few Usarufa speakers admit to speaking or understanding Auyana, which is so closely related that the two may be dialects of one language. The problems of multilingualism will not be discussed here but there may be reflections of such multilingualism in the phonological systems of the speakers involved. Realizing this to be true it is nevertheless more convenient for purposes of this paper to present the Usarufa system as though the speakers were monolingual. It may be possible to use this material as a spring board for investigation of language contact. The influences of the growing knowledge and use of Neo-Melanesian (Pidgin English) will also have to be taken into such consideration.

The Languages of the Eastern Family of the East New Guinea Highland Stock

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This book is published with the assistance of a grant from the National Science Foundation.

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Printed in the United States of America

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*Anthropological Studies
in the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea*

James B. Watson, *Editor*

VOLUMES PUBLISHED:

I. The Languages of the Eastern Family of the East New Guinea Highland Stock, edited by Howard McKaughan

II. Physical Anthropology of the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea, by R. A. Littlewood

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Main entry under title:

The Languages of the eastern family of the east
New Guinea highland stock.

(Anthropological studies in the eastern highlands
of New Guinea, v. 1)

Reports of research by the New Guinea Micro-
evolution Project.

Bibliography: p.

1. Papuan languages. 2. Kainantu region—
Languages. I. McKaughan, Howard, 1922- ed.

II. Title. III. Series.

PL6601.A35 499'.12 72-13131

ISBN 0-295-95132-X

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON PRESS
SEATTLE AND LONDON