

## Multilingual Fieldwork, and Emergent Grammars

ALEXANDRA Y. AIKHENVALD

*Research Centre for Linguistic Typology, Melbourne*

### 0. Abstract

Languages spoken in multilingual situations constantly influence each other. Analyzing their grammars forces a fieldworker to step beyond a purely synchronic approach, so as to account for linguistic systems in constant flux. The ways in which languages adjust to each other, and yet keep separate, depend on relationships between them. Tariana, the only Arawak language in the Vaupés area in north-west Amazonia (famous for its institutionalized multilingualism), converges towards its Tucanoan neighbours by developing new morphology out of its own resources. Manambu, a Ndu language from the Sepik area of New Guinea, now spoken alongside Tok Pisin and English, is evolving parallel grammatical structures: a Manambu form (free or bound) is accompanied by its equivalent in Tok Pisin. The net result is a constant creation of multiple grammatical subsystems, and enrichment of languages.

### 1. Fieldwork in a Multilingual Environment

For many years, linguistic theory has been oriented towards a ‘theoretical’ construct — linguistic competence of an ideally monolingual speaker in a homogeneous speech community (see Sorensen 1972:91). However, the reality of linguistic communities across the world is different. Multilingual communities — where knowing and using several languages is a societal norm — appear to be much more than a curious rarity. Various challenges await a fieldworker-grammarians whose endeavour is to adequately describe and analyze the linguistic competence of multilingual people.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Linguistic fieldwork is crucial for providing a factual base for an empirically-based science of linguistics. Linguistic fieldwork of the ‘immersion’ type involves living among the people who speak a language, learning the language, collecting stories and participating in the daily life (rather than asking for translations into a local lingua franca). The ultimate aim is to provide a comprehensive analytical reference grammar, and written documentation of a language (see papers overviewed in Aikhenvald 2007, on methodologies of fieldwork, and especially Dixon 2007 and Mithun 2007, on documenting a language for varied audiences).

Two forces are at work in multilingual situations. On the one hand, languages constantly influence each other, and converge. On the other hand, they continue to be separate. New grammatical patterns keep emerging, forcing a fieldworker to step beyond a purely synchronic analysis of a language. The ‘why’ and the ‘how’ of such ‘emergent’ grammars correlates in each case with the relationships between languages, and the language attitudes.

## **2. The Many Facets of Multilingualism**

Multilingual communities vary in whether there is true multilingualism or simply bilingualism, and what proportion of the community and which social groups are involved. A stable societal multilingualism can go back a long way — as in the Vaupés River Basin area of north-west Amazonia and East Arnhem Land in Australia. Or it can be fairly shallow: in numerous areas of Papua New Guinea, bilingualism in the local language and in Tok Pisin, the country’s major lingua franca, goes back only two or three generations (see, for instance, Kulick 1992).

Languages can be roughly equal in status, as used to be the case in the Vaupés area. Or one can be dominant over another, or carry more prestige — as does Tok Pisin, and now also English, in many areas of New Guinea (see Kulick 1992, Aikhenvald 2004). Relationships between languages and their spheres of use can also involve diglossia (see Ferguson 1964, Hudson 2000, and Dorian 2002). Diglossic language situations normally involve two (or more) varieties that coexist in a speech community, in complementary distribution according to the domains of usage (for example, one used at home, and another in other environments). Long-term stable multilingual situations do not require diglossic relationships between languages (see a summary and references in Aikhenvald 2006).

Once a diglossic situation disappears, so may multilingualism. The major sphere of usage for Western Iatmul among the Manambu of the Sepik area of New Guinea used to be ritual discourse (e.g. spells, incantations and song genres). Now that this ritual knowledge is on its way out, very few people know Iatmul.

If one group aggressively imposes its language on another group, contact may result in language displacement, and eventual obsolescence. Language endangerment may go hand in hand with ‘endangered’ multilingualism. This issue — sadly, relevant for most parts of the world — lies outside the scope of the present paper.

Within a multilingual community, languages in contact borrow and develop new linguistic features — including phonetic traits and habits of pronunciation, distinctive sounds (phonemes), construction types, grammatical categories, and the organization of lexical and grammatical meanings. There can also be borrowing of lexical and of grammatical forms. The extent of this varies, depending on a number of cultural and social factors, including the degree of speakers’ awareness and sense of purism, and also on the structure of the languages in contact. A researcher venturing into a multilingual environment will daily face a contact-induced language change ‘in the making’.

In a situation of stable multilingualism with a substantial time-depth, some contact-induced changes will be COMPLETED (cf. Tsitsipis 1998:34). Completed changes cover those aspects of the grammatical system of a language which do not show any synchronic variation. Speakers are hardly aware of these as ‘foreign’. ON-GOING or CONTINUOUS changes are those in progress; here the degree of influence of the other language depends on the speaker’s age and possibly other sociolinguistic variables. Speakers’ attitudes to the innovations may be suspicious — yet they are undoubtedly the seeds of emergent structures (cf. Hopper 1987).

My aim here is to offer a brief illustration of ‘emergent grammar’ in two multilingual situations from different parts of the world, with different time-depths and different language attitudes. Tariana is the only Arawak language spoken in the linguistic area of the Vaupés River Basin (north-west Amazonia, Brazil), characterized by long-term institutionalized multilingualism, rooted in ‘linguistic exogamy’ — see section 3. Manambu, a Ndu language from the Sepik area of Papua New Guinea, coexists with Tok Pisin in a relatively young bilingual situation — see section 4.<sup>2</sup> Both are true laboratories for ‘emergent grammar’ — but the mechanisms employed are not the same.

### **3. Emergent Grammar in the Multilingual Vaupés: The Case of Tariana**

#### **3.1. Background**

The Vaupés basin in north-west Amazonia (spanning adjacent areas of Brazil and Colombia) is a well-established linguistic area, characterized by obligatory multilingualism. This is based on the principle of linguistic exogamy: ‘those who speak the same language as us are our brothers, and we do not marry our sisters’. Marrying someone who belongs to the same language group is considered akin to incest and referred to as ‘those who are like dogs’ (*tfinu kayu-peni*). Language affiliation is inherited from one’s father, and is a badge of identity for each person.

Languages spoken in this area include the East Tucanoan languages Tucano, Wanano, Desano, Piratapuya, Tuyuca (and a few others), and one Arawak language, Tariana (spoken by over 100 speakers in two villages). Speakers of these participate in the exogamous marriage network which ensures obligatory multilingualism (see Aikhenvald 2002).<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> I started fieldwork on Tariana in 1991; the results include a reference grammar (Aikhenvald 2003), a dictionary and several text collections, besides a monograph on the impact of language contact (Aikhenvald 2002). Fieldwork with the Manambu started in 1995; Aikhenvald (forthcoming) is a reference grammar. I owe a debt of gratitude to the Brito and the Muniz family for teaching me Tariana, their father language, and to my adopted family in Avatip (East Sepik, Papua New Guinea) for sharing their native Manambu with me. Special thanks go to R. M. W. Dixon, Nerida Jarkey, Gerd Jendraschek, Tonya Stebbins and Jessica Cleary-Kemp, for valuable comments and suggestions.

<sup>3</sup> Multilingualism based on linguistic exogamy appears to be rare world-wide, but is hardly exceptional: a similar principle has been observed in the Wik-speaking areas of the Cape York Peninsula and other areas of Northern Australia (Sutton 1978 and p.c., Rigsby 1997); also see Stanford (2006) on the Sui minority in Southern China.

There are no diglossic relationships between languages. The rules of ‘speech etiquette’ require that a speaker should use the addressee’s father’s language, as a matter of politeness.

A striking feature of the Vaupés linguistic area is a strong cultural inhibition against language mixing viewed in terms of borrowing forms, or inserting bits of other languages, into one’s Tariana. (Those who do so are disdainfully referred to with a serial verb construction *na-ñamura na-sape* ‘they mix they speak’.) This inhibition operates predominantly in terms of loan forms and items which contain Tucanoan-like sounds, and also newly introduced loan-translations.

However, long-term interaction based on institutionalized societal multilingualism between East Tucanoan languages and Tariana has resulted in the rampant diffusion of grammatical and semantic patterns (though not so much of forms) and calquing of categories. Comparison of Tariana with closely related Arawak languages (e.g. Baniwa/Kurripako and Piapoco) helps identify the diffused and the inherited features in Tariana.

Tucanoan languages and Tariana are genetically unrelated, and typologically different. Like many Arawak languages, Tariana employs prefixes for subject cross-referencing, while Tucanoan languages are predominantly suffixing. As a result of a long-term contact, Tariana has developed numerous un-Arawak features — including cases for core arguments and a fascinating system of evidentials. These are instances of completed changes. On-going changes, on the other hand, present the fieldworker with a flux of ‘emergent’ structures. Two major mechanisms involve (a) loan translations, or calques, and (b) expanding the meaning of look-alikes.

### 3.2. How Loan Translations Help Create New Grammar

Tariana is highly polysynthetic, with at least 20 suffix and clitic slots in the verbal word (see Aikhenvald 2003:253-5). Multiword serial verb constructions convey aspectual, modal and Aktionsart meanings. Each of the components cross-references the subject; they have to have the same polarity and tense-evidentiality value. This structure, shared with Tariana’s relative Baniwa, is illustrated in (1) — considered good traditional Tariana, just the way ‘our grandfathers spoke’:<sup>4</sup>

- |     |   |            |      |
|-----|---|------------|------|
| (1) | pi-hña-ka   | pi-sita    | piha |
|     | 2sg-eat-RECENT.PAST.VISUAL                                      | 2sg-finish | you  |
|     | ‘You have finished eating; you are done eating’ (I saw you eat) |            |      |

Tucanoan languages, especially Tucano, have verb compounds (or single-word serial verbs). The second component may express a concomitant action, or

---

<sup>4</sup> Abbreviations are: COM - comitative; fem - feminine; FUT - future; LK - linker; LOC - locative; masc - masculine; O - object; pl - plural; PRED - predicate marker; sg - singular; SUBJ - subject.



Tariana speakers are proficient. One hears nominalizations marked with *-/i* in Tariana occasionally appear in commands, with a meaning ‘make sure you do or else’.

- (4) pi-hña-ri!  
2sg-eat-NOMINALIZATION  
‘Eat!’ (make sure you eat, lest you go hungry)

Tucano, just like most other East Tucanoan languages, has a suffix *-ri* used in commands with an overtone of warning, with the meaning of ‘or else’ (see Ramirez 1997, Vol. 1:148; cf. Stenzel 2004:390, Barnes 1979). The use of nominalizations as commands in Tariana has in all likelihood been influenced by the *-ri* marked imperative in Tucano.

So far, this has been restricted to casual speech by younger people. Traditional speakers do not use such forms as commands, replacing them with simple imperatives. The segmental similarity with a Tucano form is too conspicuous for the shift from a nominalization to a marker of command to be accepted at once. And yet it is becoming more and more frequent. I haven’t heard the oldest speakers use it yet. But, for many speakers, this is now part of the grammar, ‘the way we talk’.

### **3.4. The Impact of Multilingual Interaction: Convergence and Enrichment**

The ever-present need to express in one language what you express in the other one drives the convergence of patterns in Tariana. The new categories and forms are constantly developed out of the language’s own resources — these include loan translations and grammatical accommodation. Tariana is becoming more and more complex in its grammatical structure — and only a perspective on other languages with which it is constantly in contact can help a linguist understand ‘why’. The net result of the multilingual situation is a ‘layered’ language, with layer upon layer of new contact-induced patterns. No matter how strong the convergence, the grammars do not become structurally the same — examples above show how Tariana retains its prefixing profile against all odds. The metaphor ‘one grammar, several lexicons’ (Friedman 1997) would never apply to members of the Vaupés area.

### **4. Emergent Parallel Grammars: An Example from Papua New Guinea**

Manambu, from the Ndu family, has no monolingual speakers. It is spoken by about 2000 people in five villages in the Middle Sepik area of Papua New Guinea (the major ones are Avatip, Malu, and Yambon). Everyone is proficient in Tok Pisin (Melanesian Pidgin), a major lingua franca throughout Papua New Guinea. Papua New Guinea English is used in school, and by urban Manambu (whose role in the villages is marginal). Both Tok Pisin and Manambu are used at home, and also in rituals, still performed but in a reduced form (compared to what was documented earlier, e.g. by Harrison 1990). Tok Pisin is dominant in village

meetings, parent-teacher meetings at school, and in church (where Manambu is also used, but to a limited extent). That is, Tok Pisin and Manambu are in a partially diglossic situation. This is in contrast to the Tariana situation, with no obvious diglossia. The necessity for proficiency in Tok Pisin is enhanced by the number of outsiders living in the villages, mostly as the result of mixed marriages.

The Tok Pisin-Manambu-English multilingualism is fairly recent, just as in many other places in New Guinea (see Aikhenvald and Stebbins 2007). Proficient speakers of Tok Pisin were few and far between in the late 1950s. However, this does not mean that the Manambu used to be monolingual. Up until recently, the Manambu used to know a fair amount of neighbouring Iatmul (from the same family) — borrowed words, incantations and spells used to be the basis for ceremonial styles, now on their way out. The Manambu used to speak and understand the languages of their neighbours, the Kwoma/Washkuk. Only old people still have this knowledge. The Manambu-Iatmul contact resulted in numerous loans. It is hard to say anything about the structural influence from Iatmul due to potential ‘parallelism in drift’ as discussed by Sapir (1921:171-2). The contact with Kwoma resulted in numerous loans, and a fair number of shared structural patterns. But the effects of these completed changes are now a purely diachronic matter (see Chapter 22 of Aikhenvald forthcoming).

#### 4.1. The Impact of Tok Pisin and English ‘Imports’ on the Composition of Word Classes

Unlike the Tariana in the Vaupés, Manambu speakers are not averse to borrowing forms from open word classes — nouns, verbs, and adjectives — from Tok Pisin, and occasionally, from English.

Loan nouns are fully integrated: they take cases, and are assigned to masculine and feminine genders by their semantic properties, just like other nouns. Loan adjectives behave like other adjectives; for instance, they take intensifying infix *-ka-*, e.g. native *wama-* ‘white’, *wama-ka-wam* ‘very white’; loan *blu* ‘blue’ (Tok Pisin *blu*), *blu-ka-blu* ‘very blue’.

Borrowed verbs can be inflected, as in (5). Or they can occur in their root form with a support verb whose lexical meaning is ‘stand’, as in (6). English forms are in bold, and Tok Pisin forms are underlined:

- (5) **witness**      kamapə-n  
witness      appear-SEQUENCE  
streti-kə-bana  
straighten-FUT-1plSUBJ.NONPAST+3fem.sgo.NONPAST  
‘Since a **witness** has appeared, we will straighten (fix) (the dispute)’

- (6) **də**      **bas**      stati      tə-də-l  
he      first      start      ‘stand’-3masc.sgsbj.PAST-3fem.sgo.PAST  
‘He first started (it)’

Alternatively, the same verb can occur uninflected and without a support verb, as in (7):

- (7) wun statim aka kəp olsem wun statim  
 I start here.fem.sg just like.this I start  
 ‘I am starting here, I am just starting’

A Manambu verb cannot occur without inflection. That is, the infiltration of Tok Pisin imports creates a new subclass of uninflectable verbs.

The word class assignment of a few imports with modal meaning is problematic. The loan *tambu* ‘taboo, be prohibited’ occurs in the predicate slot, and can take a full clause as its complement, as in (8). So can the Tok Pisin loanword *mas* ‘must’.

- (8) Avatəpawa tambu  
 Avatip+LK+COM taboo  
 [warya-kə-bana]<sub>Complement</sub>  
 fight-FUT-1plSUBJ.NONPAST+3fem.sgTIME.NONPAST  
 ‘It is taboo (forbidden) for us to fight with Avatip (major Manambu-speaking village)’<sup>5</sup>

No other word in the language behaves this way. We are faced with a new word class of borrowed modal terms. This is an example of loan morphology, widely used, but recognizably foreign.

#### 4.2. ‘Parallel’ Structures

A major — albeit not the only — function of Tok Pisin loans is filling an existing ‘gap’: traditional Manambu did not have any one-word modal expressions, or a single word for a colour like ‘blue’. The same principle applies to some closed word classes: Manambu did not have a word meaning ‘some’ — so Tok Pisin *sampela* ‘some’ comes in handy, and is frequently used.

Manambu has a complex linguistic structure: there are nine case forms for nouns, and an array of moods, modalities, and aspects in verbs. Tok Pisin — a typical creole — appears impoverished by comparison.

The few bound morphemes which Tok Pisin has are not borrowed at all; neither are personal pronouns and demonstratives. But other items belonging to closed classes — connectives, quantifiers, and one numeral — do make their way from Tok Pisin into Manambu. Their infiltration takes place via ‘pairings’ where a native and a borrowed form appear together within one NP or verb phrase.

This process was described by Hajek (2006:170), as a mechanism for ‘gradual mediation’ of grammatical change in progress in Tetun Dili, the major lingua

<sup>5</sup> The Tok Pisin translation of (8) was *mipela i tambu long paitim Avatip* (we PRED taboo to/for fighting Avatip).

franca of East Timor in contact with Portuguese. Here, ‘while the borrowing of N, V and Adj appears to be direct and unrestricted, the borrowing of grammatical items and structures can be mediated through “lexical pairing” where native and borrowed grammatical forms appear optionally together’, e.g. purposive *atu* (Tetun Dili) *para* (Portuguese) ‘in order that’. The native Tetun Dili construction meaning ‘during’ involves a combination of a locative and a possessed body part construction. In Portuguese the equivalent construction involves the use of the preposition *durante* (similarly to English *during*). Tetun Dili has developed an intermediate construction that combines the two. The three alternatives are:

- (10) (a) iha Agustu nia laran  
 LOC August 3sg inside  
 ‘during August’ (body part construction)  
 (b) durante Agustu nia laran (< Portuguese *durante* ‘during’)  
 (c) durante Agustu

Similar parallel structures in Manambu involve (i) clause connectors, (ii) quantifiers, and (iii) numeral ‘one’ — all subtly different from each other.

(I) CLAUSE CONNECTORS IN PARALLEL STRUCTURES. Manambu has a rich array of verbal suffixes used as clause-linking devices. Subordinate clauses are always verb-final — see (11), from traditional Manambu. Square brackets indicate clause boundaries.

- (11) [Ya-tataka] [ata wa-di]  
 come-IMMEDIATE.SEQUENCE thus say-3plSUBJ.PAST  
 ‘On having come, they spoke thus’

An alternative, spontaneously occurring in the speech of most people is:

- (12) [Ya-tataka-nau] [ata wa-di]  
 come-IMMEDIATE.SEQUENCE-then thus say-3plSUBJ.PAST  
 ‘On having come then, they spoke thus’

This is parallel to the Tok Pisin equivalent of both (11) and (12), *ol i kam nau, na ol i tok olsem* (they PRED come then, and/so they PRED speak thus). The Tok Pisin connector *nau* meaning ‘then, as soon as’ reinforces the Manambu suffix, without replacing it. The connector occupies exactly the same place as in Tok Pisin. A similar example is in the second clause of (14): here the Tok Pisin contrastive *tasol* ‘but’ reinforces the Manambu contrastive linker *au*.

(II) QUANTIFIERS IN PARALLEL STRUCTURES. Quantifiers are postposed to the head noun in Manambu — see (13). In Tok Pisin, they tend to be preposed to the head noun, e.g. *olgeta man-meri* (all man-woman) ‘all the people’.

- (13) ñan [du-ta:kw aba:b] Malum  
 we man-woman all Malu+LOC  
 kwa-na-dian  
 stay-ACTION.FOCUS-1plSUBJ.NONPAST  
 ‘We all the people (lit. man-woman) live in Malu village’

In parallel Manambu-Tok Pisin structures, the Tok Pisin imports follow the Manambu term, as in (14):

- (14) ñan [du-ta:kw aba:b olgeta] Malum  
 we man-woman all(Manambu) all(Tok.Pisin) Malu+LOC  
 kwa-na-dian  
 stay-ACTION.FOCUS-1plSUBJ.NONPAST  
 au tasol ñan Avatip-adian  
 but(Manambu) but(Tok.Pisin) we Avatip-1plSUBJ.NONPAST  
 ‘We all the people (lit. man-woman) all live in Malu village, but but we  
 are (from) Avatip’

That is, a parallel structure follows the already established ‘Manambu-first’ principle, providing an exception to Moravcsik’s (1978) generalization that borrowed forms are generally borrowed together with their linear order with respect to their head: that is, a preposition is borrowed as a preposition, even if a language has nothing but postpositions.

(III) NUMERAL ‘ONE’ IN PARALLEL STRUCTURES. The Manambu are ‘number-proud’: knowing how to count is ‘a focus of purism’ similarly to Nahuatl (Hill and Hill 1980:337). The only Tok Pisin numeral in Manambu is *wanpela* ‘one’. However, it is not used for counting: its function is to introduce new participants in discourse. This is how a young speaker would start a story:

- (15) wanpela ta:kw-al  
 one woman-3fem.sgSUBJ.NONPAST  
 ‘There was a/one woman’...

The Manambu numeral *nak* ‘one’ — postposed to the head, similarly to a quantifier — is now also used this way, as in (16):

- (16) ta:kw nak-al  
 woman one-3fem.sgSUBJ.NONPAST  
 ‘There was a/one woman’...

An alternative is a parallel structure:

- (17) wanpela        ta:kw                nak-al  
one(Tok.Pisin) woman(Manambu) one(Manambu)-3fem.sgSUBJ.NONPAST  
'There was a/one a/one woman'...

The two synonymous forms appear on the different sides of the head noun: *wanpela* preserves the Tok Pisin order and *nak* follows the Manambu order, just as predicted by Moravcsik (1978). They form one NP on all counts (including prosodic parameters). But the 'Manambu-first' principle is violated.

I suggest the reason is that the function of *nak* 'one' as a way of marking new participants comes in the first place from Tok Pisin influence. We can recall that the Manambu connectors and quantifiers, discussed in (i) and (ii) above, did not bear any Tok Pisin influence in their usage.

The process of 'pairing' is characteristic of all registers, and is found with speakers of all generations. We are faced with new 'fused' structures, each subtly different from both languages which are in contact.

#### 4.3. Parallel Structures in an 'Importing' Language?

The Manambu acceptance of loanwords goes together with a more general cultural feature. In Manambu society, as in many other Sepik societies, language was traditionally considered on a par with material goods — spells, incantations and even names and individual words being traded and bought (see Harrison 1990:20-3). This is one facet of Manambu as a representative of what Margaret Mead (1938) termed 'importing culture', characterized by an emphasis on exchange and value assigned to outside goods, both material and non-material. (Indeed, proficiency in ritual poetic genres, and the knowledge of lexicon, is tantamount to monetary riches in Manambu society.)

Lexical parallelism is hardly alien to the Manambu tradition. The ritual poetic genres — namely, the songs of foiled marriages and love affairs, known as *namay* and *sui*, and also mourning songs (*gra-kudi*) — are a case in point. These poetic literary forms (improvized by performers) consist of two parallel stanzas, each referred to either as *apək* 'side, part', or *agək* 'side, counterpart (one of two)'. The second stanza restates the first one using what the Manambu speakers call 'shadowy' register, or 'the other side' (*agəkem* 'on the (other) side of two'). The 'other side' is replete with Iatmul loans, e.g. Manambu *amæy* 'mother', 'other side' *ñamæy* (from Iatmul), Manambu *asay* 'father', 'other side' *ñas* (from Iatmul). This is the only living legacy of a disappearing multilingual Manambu-Iatmul situation. It is strongly reminiscent of the binarism, or 'parallelism', believed to be a pervasive feature of the Sepik culture — in Bateson's (1936:239) words, 'the idea that everything in the world has its equal and opposite counterpart'. Parallel structures combining Manambu and Tok Pisin are along similar lines.

#### 4.4. The Net Result of the Manambu–Tok Pisin Multilingualism

In the situation of relatively recent multilingualism with no inhibitions against borrowed forms multilingual interaction results in the creation of ‘loan morphology’. This is hardly unexpected. A much more puzzling phenomenon is the creation of ‘fused’ grammatical constructions, creating compromise structures and making ‘loan syntax’ part of the linguistic competence of multilingual speakers. A set of ‘compromise parallel structures’ is on the rise.

#### 5. What Can We Conclude?

Languages spoken in multilingual situations tend to converge. At the same time, multilingual speakers need to be successful in maintaining ‘demarcation lines within their linguistic repertoires’ (Matras 2007:52) — or else they may just as well give up their ancestral language.

I have illustrated two different ways in which a balance can be achieved. Tariana converges towards its Tucanoan neighbours by developing new morphology out of its own resources. A cultural inhibition against loan forms as tokens of frowned-upon ‘language mixing’ is prevalent in the Vaupés River Basin linguistic area. The result is a ‘layered’ language: varied layers of contact-induced structures differ in their frequency, their acceptance by all members of the community, and distribution across generation groups.

Manambu, a Ndu language from the Sepik area of New Guinea, now spoken alongside Tok Pisin and English, is evolving parallel grammatical structures: a Manambu form (free or bound) is accompanied by its equivalent in Tok Pisin. This is in addition to numerous loan forms which affect the composition of Manambu word classes.

Languages in multilingual societies appear to be in a constant whirlpool of the creation of new grammatical subsystems. As a result of on-going contact-induced change, their grammars become more and more complex, and often puzzling for a typologist. The constant ‘emergent’ grammars force us — fieldworker-grammarians — to abandon an idea of an artificially synchronic grammar, moving towards ‘dynamic synchrony’ of a language, in Jakobson’s (1971:574) words, ‘involving the space-time coordinates’.

And last, but not least — to keep up with a multilingual situation, a multilingual fieldworker is a ‘must’.

#### References

- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2002. *Language Contact in Amazonia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2003. *A Grammar of Tariana, from North-West Amazonia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2004. Language Endangerment in the Sepik Area of Papua New Guinea. In O. Sakiyama and F. Endo, eds., *Lectures on Endan-*

*Multilingual Fieldwork, and Emergent Grammars*

- gered Languages: 5. From Tokyo and Kyoto Conferences 2002*, 97-142. Suita, Osaka: ELPR.
- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2006. Grammars in Contact: A Cross-Linguistic Perspective. In Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald and R. M. W. Dixon, eds., *Grammars in Contact*, 1-66. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2007. Linguistic Fieldwork: Setting the Scene. *Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung* 60(1):3-11. [Special issue *Focus on Linguistic Fieldwork*, edited by Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald.]
- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. Forthcoming (with the assistance of Yuamali Jacklyn Benji Ala and Pauline Yuaneng Luma Laki). *The Manambu Language from East Sepik, Papua New Guinea*.
- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y., and Tonya N. Stebbins. 2007. Languages of Papua New Guinea. In O. Miyaoka, O. Sakiyama and M. Krauss, eds., *Vanishing Languages of the Pacific*, 239-66. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Barnes, Janet. 1979. Los imperativos en tuyuca. *Artículos en lingüística y campos afines* 6:87-94.
- Bateson, Gregory. 1936. *Naven*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dixon, R. M. W. 1991. Naïve Linguistic Explanation. *Language in Society* 21:83-91.
- Dixon, R. M. W. 2007. Field Linguistics: A Minor Manual. *Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung* 60(1):12-31. [Special issue *Focus on Linguistic Fieldwork*, edited by Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald.]
- Dorian, Nancy C. 2002. Diglossia and the Simplification of Linguistic Space. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 9:63-70.
- Ferguson, Charles A. 1964. 'Diglossia', pp. 429-39 of *Language in culture and society*, edited by Dell Hymes. New York: Harper International.
- Friedman, Victor A. 1997. One Grammar, Three Lexicons: Ideological Overtones and Underpinnings in the Balkan *Sprachbund*. *Chicago Linguistic Society* 33:23-44.
- Hajek, John. 2006. Language Contact and Convergence in East Timor: The Case of Tetun Dili. In Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald and R. M. W. Dixon, eds., *Grammars in Contact*, 163-78. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Harrison, Simon. 1990. *Stealing People's Names*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heine, Bernd, and Tania Kuteva. 2005. *Language Contact and Grammatical Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hill, Jane, and K. C. Hill. 1980. Mixed Grammar, Purist Grammar, and Language Attitudes in Modern Nahuatl. *Language in Society* 9:321-48.
- Hopper, Paul J. 1987. Emergent grammar. *Berkeley Linguistics Society. Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Meeting. General Session and Parasession of Grammar and Cognition*:139-57.
- Hudson, A. 2000. Outline of a Theory of Diglossia. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 9:1-48.

- Jakobson, Roman O. 1971. Linguistics and Communication Theory. In *Selected writings*. Volume II. *Word and language*, 571-9. The Hague/Paris: Mouton.
- Kulick, Don. 1992. *Language Shift and Cultural Reproduction: Socialisation, Self, and Syncretism in a Papua New Guinean Village*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Matras, Yaron. 2007. Contact, Connectivity and Language Evolution. In Jochen Rehbein, Christiane Hohenstein, and Lukas Pietsch, eds., *Connectivity in Grammar and Discourse*, 51-74. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Mead, Margaret. 1938. The Mountain Arapesh: An Importing Culture. *American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers* 36:139-349.
- Mithun, Marianne. 2007. What is a Language? Documentation for Diverse and Evolving Audiences. *Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung* 60(1):42-55. [Special issue *Focus on Linguistic Fieldwork*, edited by Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald.]
- Moravcsik, Edith. 1978. Language Contact. In Joseph H. Greenberg, Charles A. Ferguson, and Edith A. Moravcsik, eds., *Universals of Human Languages*, Volume 1, 93-123. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Ramirez, Henri. 1997. *A fala Tukano dos Yepâ-Masa*. Tomo 1. *Gramática*. Tomo II. *Dicionário*. Manaus: Inspeção Salesiana Misionária da Amazônia.
- Rigsby, Bruce. 1997. Structural Parallelism and Convergence in the Princess Charlotte Bay Languages. In Patrick McConvell and Nicholas D. Evans, eds., *Archaeology and Linguistics. Aboriginal Australia in Global Perspective*, 169-78. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Sapir, Edward. 1921. *Language*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.
- Sorensen, Arthur P., Jr. 1967(1972). Multilingualism in the Northwest Amazon. *American Anthropologist* 69:670-84. Reprinted 1972 in J. B. Pride and J. Holmes, eds., *Sociolinguistics*, 78-93. Harmondsworth: Penguin Modern Linguistics readings.
- Stanford, James N. 2006. When Your Mother's Tongue is not Your Mother's Tongue: Linguistic Reflexes of Sui Exogamy. *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics* 12(2):217-29.
- Stenzel, Kristine Sue. 2004. *A Reference Grammar of Wanano*. Ph.D. diss., University of Colorado.
- Sutton, Peter. 1978. *Wik: Aboriginal Society, Territory and Language at Cape Keerweer, Cape York Peninsula, Australia*. Ph.D. diss., University of Queensland.
- Tsitsipis, L. D. 1998. *A Linguistic Anthropology of Praxis and Language Shift. Arvanitika (Albanian) and Greek in Contact*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Weinreich, Uriel. 1953. *Languages in Contact*. New York: Linguistic Circle of New York.

*Multilingual Fieldwork, and Emergent Grammars*

Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald  
Research Centre for Linguistic Typology  
La Trobe University  
Victoria 3086  
Australia

[a.aikhenvald@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:a.aikhenvald@latrobe.edu.au)