

- ; and Levinson, S. (eds.) (2001). *Language Acquisition and Conceptual Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1993). The ecology of cognitive development: research models and fugitive findings. In *Development in Context: Acting and Thinking in Specific Environments*, R. H. Wozniak and K. W. Fischer (eds.), 3–44. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Clark, H. (1973). Space, time, semantics and the child. In *Cognitive Development and the Acquisition of Language*, T. E. Moore (ed.), 27–63. New York: Academic Press.
- Cromer, R. (1991). *Language and Thought in Normal and Handicapped Children*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Gibson, J. J. (1979). *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Harris, R. (1993). Integrational linguistics. In *Actes du Xve congrès international des linguistes*, A. Crochetière, J.-C. Boulanger, and C. Ouellon (eds.), 321–323. Ste-Foy: Presses de l'Université Laval.
- Mandler, J. (1996). Preverbal presentation and language. In *Language and Space*, P. Bloom, M. Peterson, L. Nadel, and M. Garret (eds.), 365–384. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Toynbee, F. (1957 [1887]). *Community and Society [Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft]*, trans. C. P. Loomis. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
- Turner, M. (1996). *The Literary Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

John Lynch, Malcolm Ross, and Terry Crowley: *The Oceanic Languages*. Richmond: Curzon Press, 2002. xvii þ 924 pp. £125.00. Hardcover ISBN 0700711287.

The new volume in the Curzon Language Family Series presents an overview of the Oceanic subgroup of the Austronesian languages. Between 450 and 600 languages are classified as Oceanic, they “constitute the largest subgroup of the Austronesian family, itself one of the two largest language families in the world in terms of the number of language members” (p. ix). Oceanic languages are spread across a region embracing eastern Indonesia, Melanesia, Polynesia, and Micronesia. There are a number of reasons why the exact number of Oceanic languages is still unknown: some Oceanic languages are still poorly known, in some cases it is difficult to distinguish between what counts as a language and what as a dialect, speech communities are usually small, and different language attitudes, different situations of language contact and language change, and different migration patterns of speakers are all responsible for the generally vague picture that we have of this language family.

In the second half of the nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth century, the information on Melanesian Oceanic languages available was summarized in three highly influential books. In 1861, Hans Conon von der Gabelentz published “Die melanesischen Sprachen” with

sketches of ten languages (s/cf. also Gabelentz 1873); in 1885, Robert H. Codrington produced *The Melanesian Languages* with sketches of about three dozen languages; and in 1926, Sidney H. Ray published *A Comparative Study of the Melanesian Island Languages* with sketches of about two dozen languages. The authors of the volume under review here explicitly refer to this tradition, stating that

[t]his volume . . . is an attempt to provide a late twentieth century equivalent to Codrington (1885) and Ray (1926). It is our aim to present an overview of the Oceanic subgroup, and also to provide sufficient phonological and grammatical data to give typologists and comparativists a good idea of the nature of these languages, and of how much typological variety there is in this single subgroup. The references will allow those interested in particular topics, geographical areas or specific languages to delve further (p. x).

The contributors to this volume manage in an admirable way to reach these ambitious goals!

The book is divided into two major parts. After the table of contents, the preface, a list of abbreviations, and a list of illustrations (that lists the excellent maps and the highly instructive figures presented in the first part of the volume), the book starts with five chapters that place the Oceanic languages in their geographic, demographic, and social context. The first chapter “The Oceanic languages” (pp. 1–22) briefly describes the Austronesian language family. Then the authors zoom in on the geographical range and on demographic characteristics of the languages of the Oceanic subgroup. They discuss the various language contact situations, provide a brief summary on the history of research on Oceanic languages, and discuss the problem of language names in the Pacific, which they solve by using “the most generally accepted name for any language” (p. 22).

In the second chapter, the authors provide the “Sociolinguistic background” for Oceanic languages (pp. 23–33). John Lynch, Malcolm Ross, and Terry Crowley provide an overview of the sociocultural background and discuss the following topics: language varieties, vernaculars and lingua francas, language status, written forms, and Oceanic languages in the future.

In the “Typological overview,” the authors point out that the Oceanic languages do not constitute a typological unity. However, there are certain patterns and structures that tend to recur in these languages — and the structural features that are more widely distributed in Oceanic languages are described in this third chapter (pp. 34–53). This chapter has the same structure as the 43 grammar sketches presented in the second

part of the volume (see below); its content “will allow each of the[se] sketches . . . to be placed in an appropriate typological context” (p. 34).

As a rather personal aside, I would like to briefly note here that the authors obviously have misunderstood the system of classificatory particles in Kilivila (Senft 1996) claiming that it “has undergone functional expansion to become a gender system” (p. 37); this is irritating because they themselves point out in chapter four that one cannot speak of a gender system if “certain nouns could belong to more than one category” (p. 69).

The subject of chapter four is the reconstruction of “Proto Oceanic” (pp. 54–91). Here, the authors first present theoretical and methodological preliminaries, then they discuss the position of Proto Oceanic within Austronesian, and finally, they provide a Proto Oceanic grammar sketch. Again, to facilitate comparison, the structure of this subsection is identical with the structure of the grammar sketches presented in the second part of the book.

Chapter five presents an overview of the status of research into the “Internal subgrouping” of Oceanic (pp. 92–120). After providing some theoretical background information and discussing Proto Oceanic and primary subgroups of Oceanic in general, the authors describe the Admiralties, the Western Oceanic, and the Central/Eastern Oceanic subgrouping.

The second part of the volume presents grammar sketches for 43 languages. These sketches are written by the authors and by fifteen other linguists. They are either based on the author(s)’ own research, or they represent adaptations based on other researchers’ materials — to which the adaptor’s own research may have been added, or they summarize and translate other researchers’ work. The following languages are represented (the authors are mentioned in brackets): Kele (adapted by M. Ross), Mussau (M. Ross), Sobei (J. Sterner and M. Ross), Tobati (M. Donohue), Kairiru (adapted by M. Ross), Takia (M. Ross), Arep-Lokep (L. S. D’Jernes), Jabe^hm (adapted by M. Ross), Gapapaiwa (C. McGuckin), Sudest (M. Anderson and M. Ross), ‘Ala‘ala (adapted by M. Ross), Bali-Vitu (M. Ross), Kaulong (adapted by M. Ross), Siar, Taiof (both by M. Ross), Banoni (adapted by J. Lynch and M. Ross), Sisiqa (M. Ross), Roviana (S. Corston-Oliver), Kokota (B. Palmer), Gela (T. Crowley), Longgu (D. Hill), Arosi (adapted by J. Lynch and R. Horoi), Buma (D. Tryon), Mwotlap (T. Crowley), Sakao (adapted by T. Crowley), Tamabo (D. Jauncey), Raga (abstracted by T. Crowley), Vinmavis (T. Crowley), Port Sandwich, Southeast Ambrym (both adapted by T. Crowley), Lamén (R. Early), Ifira-Mele (R. Clark), Sye (T. Crowley), Anejom (J. Lynch), Ce^hmuh^hi, Xa^hra^hcu^hu^h, Iaai, Ulithian, Puluwatese (all

abstracted by J. Lynch), Rotuman (adapted by H. Schmidt), Nadroga[~] (P. Geraghty), Niufa^{ou} (abstracted by R. Early), and Marquesan (abstracted by J. Lynch). This list illustrates that some of the better known Oceanic languages are not sketched in this book. On the contrary, the authors deliberately chose languages which are not well known at all in the linguistic literature; indeed, for many of these languages, the sketch in this volume is the first grammatical treatment in print. The languages are presented in a northwest to southeast order (as some readers may have noticed already) and they represent major genetic or geographical groupings within the Oceanic subgroup as a whole. The size of the sketches varies from ten pages (e.g. the sketch for Port Sandwich) to 32 pages (the mature sketch for Takia). These 43 languages represent roughly 10% of the Oceanic languages; the references given in the sketches and in the extremely helpful “Listing of Oceanic languages, by subgroup” (pp. 877–890) make 140 more languages accessible. Each sketch follows the following structure: every sketch starts with some general information on the language, its various names, the number of its speakers, the geographical area in which it is spoken — additionally illustrated with an excellent map, previous research on the language (if any), and special features of the language (e.g. the development of tone in Jabe^m). Then information is provided on:

- phonology — covering phonemes, phonotactics and stress, and orthography;
- nouns and noun phrases — covering pronouns, nouns, articles and demonstratives, numerals and number-marking, adjectives and nominal modifiers, basic noun phrase structure, possession, and relative clauses;
- verbs and verb phrases — covering verbal derivational and inflectional morphology, basic verb phrase structure, and verb serialization;
- clause structure — covering verbless clauses, verbal clauses: core arguments, verbal clauses: peripheral arguments, and negative clauses;
- imperative and interrogative sentences;
- complex sentences — covering coordination and subordination.

The 43 grammar sketches provide the reader with a bonanza of extremely interesting and sometimes also rather unusual observations; to give just a few examples (as appetizers, so to speak): there is not a distinction with respect to types of possession in Tobati (p. 193); Kairiru and Jabe^m negate sentences by adding a negation morpheme at the end of the clause (p. 214) and the reader wonders whether this could be a dangerous linguistic structure at certain times; ‘Ala^{ala} forms many transitives directly from intransitives simply by adding the object su^{ox} (p. 354); Siar and Taiof have unusual gender marking and noun phrase structure (pp. 413^a, 428f.); Sisiqa has no adjectives as such, is not pro-drop, and its

negative declarative clauses differ markedly in structure from other declaratives (pp. 460, 463, 464f.); there is no indigenous name for the language for Southeast Ambrym (p. 660); Iaa'i has 37 consonant phonemes (p. 776); Ulithian has 43 numeral classifiers (p. 797); Puluwatese has 35 possessive classifiers marking inalienable possession, and its nonverbal predicates must include a subject marker as well as one of the negative TAM markers (pp. 809f., 812).

After the grammar sketches, there is an extremely useful 'Listing of Oceanic languages, by subgroup' (pp. 877–890), which includes all Oceanic languages John Lynch, Malcolm Ross, and Terry Crowley 'are aware of, together with alternative language names found in the literature ... and references to descriptive works' (p. 877). This listing is followed by a list of references. The book ends with an index which relates only to the first five chapters of the first part of the volume.

The book is clearly structured and the chapters and grammar sketches are easy to read. What is annoying, however, is the abundance of typos, including not properly aligned morpheme-interlinearized presentations of examples and sometimes irritating font problems like, for example, in the glosses for the Rotuman examples. Moreover, not all the sources quoted are in the list of references (e.g. Qereti 1990, referred to on p. 833), and not all references are correct (e.g. p. 882: read: Ezard 1997 [for 1977], Fellows 1894 [for 1984], p. 908 Ross 1984: read: PL, A69 [for PL, A-63], p. 914: read: Young, Maribelle 1979 [for 1978]). This is deplorable, because such an important volume would certainly have deserved very careful copy-editing (especially given its outrageous price)!

Nevertheless, this book is a must not only for Austronesianists, but also for typologists and comparativists. Together with the Comparative Austronesian Dictionary (Tryon 1995) and the already existing grammars of Oceanic languages it will be one of the most helpful, central, and basic reference tools, especially for all Oceanists.

Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics,
Nijmegen

Gunter Senft

References

- Codrington, Robert H. (1885). *The Melanesian Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gabelentz, Hans Conon von der (1861). Die melanesischen Sprachen nach ihrem grammatischen Bau und ihrer Verwandtschaft unter sich und mit den Malaia'sch Polynesischen Sprachen. *Abhandlungen der philologisch-historischen Classe der ko'niglich sa'chsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften* 3, 1–266.

- (1873). Die melanesischen Sprachen nach ihrem grammatischen Bau und ihrer Verwandtschaft unter sich und mit den Malaia'sch Polynesischen Sprachen. Abhandlungen der philologisch-historischen Classe der ko'niglich sa'chsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften 7, 1–186.
- Ray, Sidney H. (1926). *A Comparative Study of the Melanesian Island Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Senft, Gunter (1996). *Classificatory Particles in Kilivila*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Tryon, Darrell T. (ed.) (1995). *Comparative Austronesian Dictionary. An Introduction to Austronesian Studies*. Five vols. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.