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Lynch, John

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CHAPTER 10

Pidgins, Creoles, and Koines

Contact may have quite drastic effects on a language. But it may also lead to the creation of totally new languages, which in some senses at least qualify as “mixed” languages. Three of these new languages are, in terms of number of speakers, among the largest languages spoken in the Pacific today (although not all speakers of any of these languages speak them as their mother tongue). I use the term Melanesian Pidgin as a cover term for the three languages/dialects known as Tok Pisin in Papua New Guinea, Pijin in Solomon Islands, and Bislama in Vanuatu, spoken in all by perhaps three million people. Hiri Motu is spoken in Papua New Guinea by about a quarter of a million people. And Fiji Hindi, one of the two major languages of Fiji, has more than 300,000 speakers. This chapter looks at these three languages and at similar languages in various parts of the Pacific.

10.1. Pidginization, Creolization, and Koineization

How do languages like Melanesian Pidgin develop? What is it about certain kinds of contact situations that gives rise to new languages?

The term pidgin or pidgin language refers to a language that develops in a multilingual contact situation, where the contact between the different groups is prolonged but relatively restricted. Trade relationships, plantations, and ships’ companies are typical breeding grounds for such languages, and in situations like these the process of pidginization begins to take place. All speakers of a pidgin language use it as a second language, to communicate with speakers of other languages when there is no other common language. In comparison with the first languages of its speakers, a pid-
gin is usually simplified in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. In many cases, especially in colonial situations, the vocabulary of the pidgin is drawn mainly from the politically dominant (i.e., colonial) language, whereas the grammar is often based on the language(s) of the colonized people.

Urbanization and marriage between people from different linguistic backgrounds can turn a pidgin into people’s first language, especially when those people are the children of such mixed marriages growing up in towns. In these cases, the pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary of the original pidgin language tends to expand rapidly and considerably. The language becomes more complex because it is being used for all the communicative purposes of a “normal” language. This process of expansion is referred to as creolization. A creole, or a creole language, is a language that has developed from a pidgin, but which is now the first language of many of its speakers.

A different kind of mixing—what is known as dialect mixing—produces a different kind of language. When people speaking different geographical dialects of a language are relocated and thrown together in a new community, what is known as a koine often develops, through a process known as koineization. Each dialect contributes some elements, and the resultant koine is a blend of the original dialects. While Melanesian Pidgin and Hiri Motu are the result of the processes of pidginization and creolization, Fiji Hindi is a koine.²

10.2. Melanesian Pidgin

Melanesian Pidgin and various Australian creoles are referred to as “English-based” or “English-lexifier” creoles. This means simply that the bulk of their vocabulary is derived from English, though some vocabulary, and much of the grammar, may have different origins. (This does not mean that these languages are “broken English” or “baby-talk” languages; after all, although a very significant proportion of the vocabulary of English comes from Romance languages like Latin and French, we don’t consider English to be “broken Romance”!)

10.2.1. Historical Background

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw the first prolonged and continuous contact between people living in the Pacific and outsiders. In the Pacific Islands, European explorers and missionaries were followed by whalers, sandalwooders, pearlers, bêche-de-mer³ fishermen, and traders, all of whom had regular, if sporadic, contact with at least some people in
some Pacific islands. In Australia and New Zealand, of course, contact was more intense in many areas as a result of European settlement. This contact intensified during the nineteenth century as labor recruiters began recruiting Pacific Islanders to work on plantations in various parts of the region, especially Samoa, Fiji, and Queensland. In Queensland there was also some contact between Pacific Islanders and aboriginal Australians, who themselves were often moved from their tribal homelands into situations where they lived and worked with speakers of other languages.

In all of these situations, numerous fairly unstable pidgins developed. In Melanesia and parts of Australia, these unstable pidgins developed into relatively stable languages as people who had learned different varieties in different parts of the Pacific came into contact. The contact between Europeans, mainly English speakers, Pacific Islanders (almost exclusively speakers of Oceanic languages), and aboriginal Australians was responsible for the very significant English input into the vocabulary of these creoles. But it was not just this contact that was significant in the development of Melanesian Pidgin. The contact between Pacific Islanders from different linguistic backgrounds was important from the beginning, became even more so later on, and was probably responsible for the Austronesian contribution to the grammar of Melanesian Pidgin.

By the latter part of the nineteenth century, English-based pidgins were spoken, in various forms and with various levels of sophistication, in almost the whole of the Pacific Basin: from New Guinea to Pitcairn Island, and from the Marshalls and Hawai‘i to New Caledonia and New Zealand. In most of these places, however, the pidgins died out. In some places, like New Caledonia and the British colony of Papua (the southern half of what is now Papua New Guinea), this was as a result of government policy. The governments were strongly opposed to a “bastard” form of English being used, though possibly for different reasons (the British in Papua because they saw it as a “bastard” language, the French probably because they saw it as a form of English!). In other places, like most of the countries of Polynesia, the pidgin simply became unnecessary as people from other parts of the Pacific stopped being recruited to work on plantations in these countries, and as educational levels improved. In Samoa, for example, the cessation of labor recruiting and the establishment of schools meant that pidgin English was no longer needed. Samoan was the language of communication between Samoans, while first German and then English were used for communicating with foreigners.

The situation in Melanesia and Australia was very different. First, the countries are geographically larger and linguistically more diverse than those of Polynesia and Micronesia, and it was more difficult for governments to exercise strong control over language use. Second, although recruitment
of Melanesian laborers to overseas plantations stopped soon after 1900, this simply meant that laborers began moving around their own country working on newly established plantations, frequently outside their own language communities. Any plantation might have a labor force drawn from a large number of different language groups. Third, as a result of this internal mobility, men often married women who spoke a different language, and the pidgin would have been the only language used in the home. Finally, the establishment of urban centers attracted people speaking a multiplicity of languages from far and wide.

Social conditions in Melanesia and in parts of Australia, therefore, were ripe not just for the preservation and retention of the pidgin but also for its development into a creole. Children grew up speaking it as their first language; adults who had not returned to their traditional homes for many years found that they were using the pidgin/creole more and more, and their own language less and less. As the twentieth century progressed, Melanesian Pidgin became the language of the people in what were to become the independent states of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Australian creoles and varieties of English spoken by Aboriginal people acquired similar importance.

10.2.2. Different Histories

The Melanesian Pidgin spoken by Papua New Guineans, Solomon Islanders, and ni-Vanuatu is recognizably the same language—with recognizable differences between how it is spoken in each of these three countries. The following examples show both the similarities and the differences between these three varieties:

**Tok Pisin**

Dispela pikanini i sindaun i stap na kaikai kiau wantaim kek.

**Pijin**

Desfala pikanini i sidaon an kaekae eg weitim kek.

**Bislama**

Pikinini ya i stap staon mo kakae eg wetem gato.

‘This child is sitting down and eating eggs and cake.’

Where do these kinds of differences come from? To answer this question, we need to look more closely at the historical development of this language.

Men from Vanuatu were first recruited to work on plantations in Queensland and Fiji in the 1860s, and a little later men from the Solomon Is-
lands were recruited for the same work, so there was considerable contact between ni-Vanuatu and Solomon Islanders at this time. Only a few people from this part of the Pacific, however, were recruited to work in Samoa, and then only for a short time.

Men from the German colony of New Guinea, however, did not go to Queensland or to Fiji, which were British colonies. Rather, starting in the 1880s, they went to work on the plantations in Samoa, then a German colony. For a few years they were in contact with ni-Vanuatu and Solomon Islanders, from whom they would have learned the basics of Melanesian Pidgin, but for the next few decades, the New Guinea version of Melanesian Pidgin, known today as Tok Pisin, developed in isolation both from other varieties of the language and from English. The German and Samoan languages contributed some words to early Tok Pisin, although many of these have disappeared. The major contributing languages (other than English) have been Tolai (cf. kiau ‘egg’ in the example above) and other Austronesian languages of New Britain and New Ireland, since Rabaul (where Tolai is spoken) was the headquarters of German New Guinea, and the place where most of the laborers were recruited from or returned to.

Pijin and Bislama did not undergo any of these influences. However, because the French jointly ruled the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) with the British for most of the twentieth century, Bislama has incorporated a number of words of French origin (like gato ‘cake’ in the example above). It has also taken in quite a few words from local languages. Neither French (for obvious reasons) nor local languages (for less obvious reasons) have made any significant contribution to Pijin in Solomon Islands, however. The different colonial histories of each country, along with different labor-recruitment patterns, meant that there were significant differences in the contact situations while each version of the language was developing.

10.2.3. The Structure of Melanesian Pidgin

In recent years, the influence of English on Melanesian Pidgin has become even more dominant than in the past, not only in terms of vocabulary, but to some extent also in pronunciation and grammar as well. At the same time, there is considerably more contact today between Melanesians from different countries, and interdialectal influence is also beginning to be seen. One of the features of a language undergoing creolization is that different people speak it with different degrees of fluency. For some people, it is their first language. For others, it is very much a second language, and the way they speak it is often influenced by their first language. Those who have been educated in English often incorporate words and other linguistic fea-
tures from English into their Pidgin, while less educated speakers do this much less frequently. And although all languages are changing, languages like Melanesian Pidgin are changing much faster than others.

Hence, it is often difficult to say exactly what is or is not “in” a language like Melanesian Pidgin. I try to describe the variety spoken by fluent but not highly educated speakers, but comment from time to time on common variations from these patterns.

Sound System

Melanesian Pidgin has the same five-vowel system as is found in the majority of the languages of the Pacific:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{i} & \text{u} \\
\text{e} & \text{o} \\
\text{a} \\
\end{array}
\]

Educated speakers, however, sometimes incorporate English vowels into their speech. An educated Papua New Guinean might say /bæŋ/ or /bæŋk/ for ‘bank,’ whereas someone less educated will say /beŋ/.

The basic consonant system is also similar to that found in many of the Oceanic languages of Melanesia:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
P & t & k \\
b & d & g \\
f & s & h \\
v & \delta & \eta \\
m & n & \eta \\
l & r \\
w & y \\
\end{array}
\]

Notable omissions, as a result of the pidginization process, are the common Melanesian fricatives /x/ and /γ/, which don’t occur in English, and the English fricatives /θ ð z ñ/, which are rare in Melanesian languages. Both open and closed syllables may occur, and consonant clusters are common.

Variation in the pronunciation of consonants is of two kinds. Pidgin speakers who also speak English often introduce phonemic distinctions from that language that are not made by less educated speakers. So an educated speaker might say /ʃu/ ‘shoe’ and /tʃetʃ/ or /tʃətʃ/ ‘church’ whereas an uneducated speaker would be more likely to say /su/ and /sios/.
The other kind of variation is probably related to first-language interference. Many speakers “confuse” similar sounds, probably because these sounds are not phonemically distinct in their own languages. Among the pairs of sounds commonly confused by some speakers of Melanesian Pidgin are /p/ and /b/; /t/ and /d/; /k/ and /g/; /p/ and /f/; /t/ and /s/; /h/ and absence of a consonant; /b/ and /v/; /l/ and /r/; /v/ and /w/; and /n/ and /ŋ/. For example, some speakers of Tok Pisin say /pis/ ‘fish,’ and others /fis/; /tasol/ ‘only’ is often heard as /tatol/; and while some speakers say /haumas/ ‘how much?’ others would say /aumas/ or /aumat/.

The orthography is fairly straightforward, with ng being used to represent /ŋ/ (and j for /ʤ/ in Pijin and Bislama). For most speakers, voiced stops do not occur word-finally, but etymological spellings are used in Pijin and Bislama: /pik/ ‘pig’ and /gut/ ‘good’ are written pig and gut in Pijin and Bislama, but pik and gut in Tok Pisin. The diphthongs /ai/, /oi/ and /au/ are written ai, oi, and au in Tok Pisin, but ae, oe, and ao in Pijin and Bislama, so the words for ‘right,’ ‘boy,’ and ‘house’ are rait, boi, haus in Tok Pisin, but raet, boe, haos in Bislama.

Sentence Structure

Melanesian Pidgin is a subject-predicate language and has both verbal and verbless sentences. In verbal sentences, the phrase order is SV in intransitive sentences and SVO in transitive sentences.

**Tok Pisin**

### Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wampela</th>
<th>man i</th>
<th>kam.</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘A man came/is coming.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maria i</th>
<th>kilim</th>
<th>pik</th>
<th>bilong mi.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>kill</td>
<td>TRANS</td>
<td>pig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Maria killed/is killing my pig.’

Although there is no passive, attention can be focused on the object of a transitive clause by moving it to the front of the sentence, where it can be followed by the particle ia and a pause. This often translates a passive English sentence. Here is the object-focused version of the second sentence above:

**Tok Pisin**

### Object

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pik</th>
<th>bilong</th>
<th>mi</th>
<th>ia,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pig</td>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>FOCUS,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maria</th>
<th>i kilim.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>PREDICATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kill:TRANS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As for my pig, Maria killed/is killing it.
My pig was killed/is being killed by Maria.

Verbless sentences follow a pattern similar to verbal sentences, with subject preceding predicate.

Pijin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Predicate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hem</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he</td>
<td>PREDICATE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘He is my husband.’

Pronouns

Pronouns in Melanesian Pidgin follow the Austronesian pattern: They distinguish at least three numbers and also show the inclusive/exclusive distinction in the first person non-singular. While the dual is common, the trial is considerably rarer. Here are the pronouns of Bislama:

Bislama

Singular

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>mi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>yu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it</td>
<td>hem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dual

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>we two INC</td>
<td>yumitu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we two EXC</td>
<td>mitufala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you two</td>
<td>yutufala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they two</td>
<td>tufala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trial

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>we three INC</td>
<td>yumitrifala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we three EXC</td>
<td>mitrifala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you three</td>
<td>yutrifala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they three</td>
<td>trifala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plural

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>we INC</td>
<td>yumi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we EXC</td>
<td>mifala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>yufala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they</td>
<td>olgeta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is virtually no morphophonemic variation in the pronouns. The same form is used as an independent pronoun, as subject or object, or after a preposition:
Bislama

\[ Mi \text{ } hang-em \text{ } ol \text{ } klos \text{ } blong \text{ } mi \text{ } long \text{ } laen. \]
I hang-TRANS PL clothes POSS me on line

“I hung my clothes on the line.”

\[ Hem \text{ } i \text{ } givim \text{ } gato \text{ } ya \text{ } long \text{ } yufala \text{ } from \]
he PREDICATE give:TRANS cake this to you:PL because

\[ hem \text{ } i \text{ } laekem \text{ } yufala \text{ } tumas. \]
he PREDICATE like:TRANS you:PL very

‘He/she gave the cake to you (pl.) because he/she likes you a lot.’

Nouns, Noun Phrases, and Prepositions

Nouns are almost universally invariable in form. There are no articles and only a small number of demonstratives. Tok Pisin has dispela and Pijin desfala ‘this’ (sometimes ‘that’), both of which precede the noun. Bislama ya ‘this, that’ follows the noun. The following sentences all mean much the same thing.

**Tok Pisin**

\[ Dispela \text{ } man \text{ } i \text{ } laik-im \text{ } dispela \text{ } meri. \]
this man PREDICATE like-TRANS this woman

**Pijin**

\[ Desfala \text{ } man \text{ } i \text{ } laek-em \text{ } desfala \text{ } woman. \]
this man PREDICATE like-TRANS this woman

**Bislama**

\[ Man \text{ } ya \text{ } i \text{ } laekem \text{ } woman \text{ } ya. \]
Man this PREDICATE like:TRANS woman this

‘This man likes this/that woman.’

Adjectives, numerals, and other quantifiers normally precede the noun in a noun phrase,\(^6\) although there are some modifiers that follow the head. In Tok Pisin, all monosyllabic adjectives and numerals, as well as some that have two or more syllables, must occur with the suffix -pela in this context. In Pijin and Bislama, the corresponding suffix -fala is less frequently used, often occurring only when the adjective is emphasized. Here are some examples of noun phrases. The head noun is underlined.

**Tok Pisin**

\[ tupela \text{ } liklik \text{ } meri \]
two small girl

‘two little girls’
there is only a small number of prepositions (but not so small a number as some writers would have us believe). the following are the commonest prepositions in Bislama:

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textbf{Bislama} \\
\textit{long} & location, direction, source, instrument, time \\
\textit{blong} & possession, purpose, beneficiary \\
\textit{olsem} & ‘like, as \\
\textit{wetem} & accompaniment, instrument \\
\textit{from} & cause \\
\end{tabular}

\textbf{Examples:}

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textbf{Bislama} \\
\textit{Mi kam long Vila from wan kos}. \\
I come to Vila because:of one course \\
‘I came to Vila for a course.’
\end{tabular}
Who is your father working with?

For a fish like this one, you have to cut it with a sharp knife.

The other two dialects are slightly different. From does not occur in Tok Pisin, which uses the compound form bilong wanem ‘for what?’ to mark cause instead. Pijin has the same prepositions as Bislama plus fo, which is used to indicate purpose or tendency:

**Pijin**

Mifala laek fo go.
We want to go.

Hem i man fo dring.
He man for drink

There are no special possessive pronouns in Melanesian Pidgin. The possessive preposition (Tok Pisin bilong, Pijin and Bislama blong) may be followed by either a noun or a pronoun possessor:

**Pijin**

nem blong yu belo blong sios
Name you bell possess church

Verbs and the Verb Complex

Verbs are morphologically quite simple in Melanesian Pidgin. The only common affix is the transitive suffix.

**Tok Pisin**

Em i rit i stap.
He read be

Em i rit-im dispela buk i stap.
He read this book be
With certain verbs, while the transitive form takes the suffix, the intransitive form is often reduplicated.

**Tok Pisin**

*Mama*  
\text{mother}  \text{PREDICATE} \text{wash-TRANS} \text{PL} \text{child}  
‘Mom washed the children.’

*Ol pikinini*  
\text{PL} \text{child}  \text{PREDICATE} \text{INTRANSITIVE-wash}  
‘The children washed/swam.’

The verb complex does, however, contain a number of particles marking tense-aspect and other functions. Verbs (and nonverbal predicates) take a preverbal particle *i*, which marks what follows as a predicate. This use of *i* can be seen in almost every example above.\(^7\) In recent years, however, the use of this predicate marker has become more and more optional, especially in Tok Pisin and Pijin. Thus the two Tok Pisin sentences above are just as often heard as *Mama wasim ol pikinini* and *Ol pikinini waswas*.

The verb is very often unmarked for tense, and lack of marking can indicate either present or past. Other tenses and aspects are marked by particles, some preverbal, others postverbal.

**Tok Pisin**

\begin{tabular}{lll}
\text{PREVERBAL} & \text{POSTVERBAL} \\
\text{bai} & \text{future} & \text{pinis} & \text{completed} \\
\text{bin} & \text{incomplete past} & \text{i stap} & \text{continuous} \\
\text{ken} & \text{optative, potential} \\
\text{inap} & \text{ability} \\
\text{laik} & \text{intention} \\
\text{save} & \text{habitual} \\
\end{tabular}

Three of these particles are, or derive from, verbs: *laik*, from *laikim*, ‘like, want,’ *save*, which as a verb means ‘know, know how to,’ and *i stap*, which as a verb means ‘to be (in a place).’ Some examples of these tense-aspect particles (plus the negative preverbal particle *no*) follow.

**Tok Pisin**

*Em*  
\text{he}  \text{PREDICATE} \text{no} \text{save} \text{kaikai} \text{mit.}  
‘He/she doesn’t eat meat.’

*Yu*  
\text{you}  \text{FUTURE} \text{bai} \text{wok-im} \text{pinis.}  
‘You will have done it.’
Pita i inap karim ol kago bilong yu.
Peter PREDICATE able carry:TRANS PL cargo POSS you
Peter can carry your things.'

Mamok i no bin kam.
Mamok PREDICATE not PAST come
'Mamok didn’t come.'

Reduplication of the verb for other purposes than to indicate intransitivity is relatively common, especially in Bislama. There reduplication can have the following functions: reciprocal action, random action, repeated action, plurality, intensity, and the distributive.

**Bislama**

Leg blong hem i solap.
leg POSS he PREDICATE swell
‘His/her leg is swollen.’

Leg blong hem i sol-solap.
leg POSS he PREDICATE INTENSITY-swell
‘His/her leg is really swollen.’

Ol lif oli foldaon.
PL leaf PL:PREDICATE fall
‘The leaves fell down.’

Ol lif oli fol-foldaon long hariken.
PL leaf PL: PREDICATE RANDOM-fall in cyclone
‘The leaves fell all over the place in the cyclone.’

10.3. The Pidgins of the Motu Traders

The Motu people, who live around Port Moresby, speak an Oceanic language. The western Motu particularly, “at the time of European contact (and for an unknown number of years before) ... were involved in a complex network of trading relationships with linguistically related and unrelated groups east, west and inland of their present position. The most spectacular and important part of this trade ... was the hiri, or annual trading voyage to the Gulf of Papua some 300 kilometres away to the west” (Dutton 1985, 20).

In the course of the hiri expedition, two separate (and apparently unnamed) pidgins developed. One was based mainly on the Koriki language of the western Gulf of Papua, the other on the Eleman languages of the eastern part of the Gulf. Dutton (1985) calls these the Hiri Trading Language
(Koriki variety) and the Hiri Trading Language (Eleman variety), respectively.

That, however, is by no means the end of the story. The Motu also used a pidginized version of their own language (Dutton calls this Simplified Motu) with other foreigners—originally probably in trade with their Oceanic-speaking neighbors, and later with newcomers to the area. After European contact in the late nineteenth century, they also used a variety of Melanesian Pidgin with early colonial officials and other outsiders.

The two Hiri Trading Languages were restricted to use on the *hiri*, and when that trading expedition finally ceased toward the middle of the twentieth century, the languages also died a natural death. The English-based pidgin died a less natural death: it was proscribed by the British government, which adopted instead the pidginized version of Motu as the language of contact.

The first British police force in Papua consisted of Fijians, Solomon Islanders, and Kiwais from the Daru area of western Papua. By the time the police force was being established, there were a number of other foreigners of various origins settling in the Port Moresby area. Simplified Motu soon became the lingua franca of this motley collection of people. It was spread outside Port Moresby mainly by the police on their patrols along the coast and into the interior, but also by released prisoners who were given positions of authority as village constables. The language acquired the name Police Motu, but in the 1970s, as the connotations of the word “police” were deemed pejorative, the name Hiri Motu was chosen—in the mistaken belief that Police Motu was a continuation of the language(s) spoken on the *hiri*.

The differences between the Hiri Trading Languages and Hiri (or Police) Motu can be seen in the following sentences (from Dutton 1985, 33–34).

**Hiri Trading Language (Koriki Variety)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Enane</em></th>
<th><em>pu</em></th>
<th><em>miai</em></th>
<th><em>anea!</em></th>
<th><em>Na</em></th>
<th><em>okuai!</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>go sago get come me give</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Go and bring some sago!’ ‘Give it to me!’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hiri Trading Language (Eleman Variety)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Abuari</em></th>
<th><em>pai</em></th>
<th><em>avaia</em></th>
<th><em>abus!</em></th>
<th><em>Ara</em></th>
<th><em>porohalaia!</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>go sago get come me give</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hiri (Police) Motu**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Oi</em></th>
<th><em>lao</em></th>
<th><em>rabia</em></th>
<th><em>oi</em></th>
<th><em>mailaia!</em></th>
<th><em>Lau</em></th>
<th><em>oi</em></th>
<th><em>henia!</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>you go sago you bring me you give</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Go and bring some sago!’ ‘Give it to me!’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two features give an idea of the simplified nature of Hiri Motu in comparison with Motu itself. First, Motu has the normal Oceanic contrast between direct and indirect possessive constructions and, in indirect possession, contrasts food (marked with a-) and other possessions (marked with e-):

**Motu**

(lau)  
(tama-gu)  
(I)  
‘my father’

(lau)  
(a-gu)  
(I)  
POSS:FOOD-my  
food  
‘my food’

(lau)  
(e-gu)  
(I)  
POSS:GENERAL-my  
house  
‘my house’

Hiri Motu simply uses the general possessive form for all nouns: *lauegu tamana* ‘my father,’ *lauegu aniani* ‘my food,’ *lauegu ruma* ‘my house.’

Second, Motu has independent pronouns, as well as subject prefixes and object suffixes to verbs. Hiri Motu uses free pronouns in all of these environments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motu</th>
<th>Hiri Motu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Independent Subject Object All environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>lau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>oi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it</td>
<td>ia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>we INC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we EXC</td>
<td>ai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>umui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they</td>
<td>idia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hiri Motu was once widely spoken in Papua (although virtually not at all in New Guinea, the northern half of Papua New Guinea), and it is one of the three official languages of Papua New Guinea (alongside English and Tok Pisin). In recent years, however, the number of its speakers, and consequently its status, have tended to decline, partly as a result of inroads into Papua by Tok Pisin, and partly because people who have been educated tend to use English in preference to Hiri Motu.
10.4. Fiji Hindi

Beginning in the late nineteenth century, more than sixty thousand indentured laborers were recruited from India to work on plantations in Fiji. Initially, these recruits came mainly from northern India, where languages of the Indo-European family are spoken. Many laborers spoke various dialects of Hindi, but many also spoke what was probably a pidgin, known as Bazaar Hindustani. By the early part of the twentieth century, however, almost half the laborers were being recruited from South India. These workers spoke the quite unrelated languages of the Dravidian family. The plantation environment brought into contact Hindi speakers from different dialects (numerically the largest group of Indians), speakers of Hindi and other Indian languages (related and unrelated), speakers of Indian languages, Fijian, and English, and finally, Indians and some of the twenty-seven thousand Pacific Islanders who were also recruited to work on Fijian plantations.

A number of languages developed or were used on the Fiji plantations, an early variety of Melanesian Pidgin, a pidginized variety of Fijian, and a pidginized variety of Hindi among them. The first of these has died out in Fiji, but the other two are still used to some extent between people of different ethnic groups who have no other common language.

In addition, however, another language also developed among Indians in Fiji. Through koineization, Fiji Hindi, or Fiji Bāt (= ‘language’) evolved, especially among ethnic Indians born in Fiji. Fiji Hindi incorporates elements from a number of Hindi dialects. Some examples of the mixture of dialects involved in the development of Fiji Hindi can be seen in the pronoun system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiji Hindi</th>
<th>Hindi dialect source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>ham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you (intimate)</td>
<td>tum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you (formal)</td>
<td>āp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it (near)</td>
<td>ī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it (remote)</td>
<td>ū</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bhojpuri ham
Awadhi, Braj tum
Awadhi āp(u)
Bhojpuri, Awadhi ī
Awadhi, Bhojpuri ū

The formation of plural pronouns by the addition of log ‘people’ to the singular, as in ham log ‘we,’ is characteristic of Magahi.

There were other contributors to Fiji Hindi as well: Bazaar Hindustani, the Pidgin Hindi spoken on the plantations, English (as one might expect), and also Fijian. Some examples from Fijian follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiji Hindi</th>
<th>Fijian source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dakāu</td>
<td>cakau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kūmāla</td>
<td>kumala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nangonā</td>
<td>na yaqona</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result of this koineization process is a new form of Hindi different from any spoken in India.

A final complicating factor in the Hindi situation in Fiji has been the fact that, although Fiji Hindi is the first language of virtually all Fiji Indians, who speak it in informal contexts, it is not the language of formal situations. Standard (Indian) Hindi is used in schools, on radio, in print, and in other formal contexts. A situation of diglossia has developed in which people use one variety (Standard Hindi) in public meetings, for religious occasions, and in other formal situations, and the other variety (Fiji Hindi) in informal situations.