

CROWLEY, TERRY. *Naman: a vanishing language of Malakula (Vanuatu)*.
 Canberra: Pacific Linguistics, 2006. Pp. 287. ISBN 0-5883566-5. AUD
 \$59.00.

This book is a grammar of Naman, a moribund language spoken on the island of Malakula in central Vanuatu. It is one of the four grammars of Malakula languages that Terry Crowley was working on at the time of his death in 2005. All four were edited by John Lynch and published by Pacific Linguistics the following year.

Prior to C.'s fieldwork, Naman was almost completely undocumented, apart from the 1934 notes of ethnographer A. Bernard Deacon and a 270-item wordlist compiled by D.T. Tryon in 1976. As with all the indigenous languages of Malakula, Naman is a member of the Central Vanuatu subgroup of Oceanic languages, and like many of them it is not likely to be spoken much longer.

In Ch. 1 "Introduction" (1-23), C. addresses language issues in Malakula, which has undergone rapid depopulation as well as an island-wide demographic shift from the mountains to the coast during the last century. After describing previous work on the language and giving an overview of his own study of it, he briefly discusses the effects of language shift on Naman.

Ch. 2 "Phonology" (24-55) contains an overview of the phoneme inventory with a lengthy discussion of schwa-deletion, which is optional in certain environments. Syllabification, stress, phonotactics, and morphophonemics are treated in turn, and C. finishes with a preliminary analysis of the historical phonology of the language, based on comparison with Naman's closest relative, Neve'ei.

Ch. 3 "Nouns and noun phrases" (56-97) provides information on pronouns, noun formation, possession (Naman shows the expected direct/indirect distinction), num-

bers, adjectives, demonstratives, relative clauses, and coordinated noun phrases.

Ch. 4 "Verbs and the verb complex" (98-140) deals with the inflection of verbs, which take two sets of subject-marking prefixes based on the distinction between realis and irrealis moods. Negation is marked discontinuously by two separate affixes. Other inflections and some important derivational processes are discussed, followed by the verb complex.

Ch. 5 "Simple sentences" (141-175) explains the basic structure of non-verbal clauses, verbal clauses, non-core constituents (including Naman's many prepositions and its single postposition), and interrogative clauses. Ch. 6 "Multi-predicate sentences" (176-219) covers all constructions that involve more than one inflected verb.

Ch. 7 "Illustrative texts" (220-232) presents three of the 24 narratives recorded by C. between 2001 and 2004. It is worth noting that the majority of illustrative sentences in this grammar have been taken directly from the 24 recorded narratives, which renders them both interesting and convincing examples of speech patterns. Ch. 8 "Naman lexicon" (233-284) contains approximately 1200 entries, many of which are illustrated with example sentences, as well as an English-Naman finder list.

Overall C.'s grammar is an excellent example of how much can be learned in the course of a "salvage study of a disappearing language" (20). It serves as a reminder that there is much more to be done for the languages of Malakula, many of which are or will soon be in the same perilous situation as Naman.

[Emily Bartelson, *University of Hawai'i at Mānoa*]

Document URI : <http://hdl.handle.net/10125/1805>